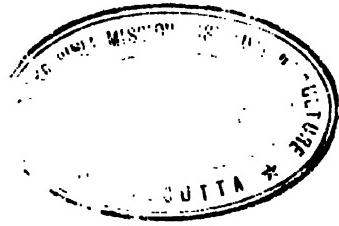


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Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



प्रतिष्ठित आमत प्राप्य धरानिवेष्टत ।

Katha Upanishad. 4.

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Prabuddha Bharata



Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

JANUARY 1921

[No. 294

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

PART II.—XXIV.

[Place: Belur Math. Year—1902.

Subjects: *The giving up of national dress, food and mode of life is reprehensible one can learn from all, but that learning which kills one's individuality is to be avoided by all means—conversation with the disciple about the mode of dressing—the disciple praying to Swamiji for the power of concentration in meditation—Swamiji blessing the disciple—the last parting.]*

To-day is the first of Asar. The disciple has come to the Math before dusk from Baly, which is his present place of occupation. He has come to-day with his office-dress on as he has not found time to change it. Coming to the Math, he prostrated at the feet of Swamiji and enquired about his health. Swamiji replied that he was well, but looking at his dress, he said, "As you put on coat and trousers—why don't you put on collars then?" Saying this, he called Swami Saradananda who was near and said, "Give him to-morrow two collars from my stock of clothings." Swami Saradananda bowed assent to his order.

The disciple then putting off his office-dress in a different room of the Math, and washing his hands and face came to Swamiji. Swamiji addressing him said: "By giving up one's national costume and ways of eating and mode of life, one gets denationalised. One can learn from all, but that learning which leads to denationalisation does not help your uplift but becomes the cause of your degradation."

Disciple.—Sir, one cannot do without putting on dress approved by superior European officials in official quarters.

Swamiji.—No one prevents that. In the interests of your service, you may put

on official dress in official quarters. But on returning home you should be a regular Bengali Babu—with flowing cloth, a native shirt and with the Chudder on the shoulder. Do you understand?

Disciple.— Yes, Sir.

Swamiji.— You go about from house to house only with the European shirt on. In the West to go about to people's houses with the shirt on is ungentlemanly—one is considered naked. Without putting on coat over the shirt, you will not be welcomed in a gentleman's house. What have you learned to imitate in the matter of dress? Boys and young men now-a-days adopt a peculiar mode of dress which is neither Indian nor Western, but a monstrous combination.

After such talk Swamiji began to pace the banks of the river, and the disciple was alone with him. The disciple was hesitating to ask Swamiji a question about religious practices.

Swamiji.— What are you thinking of? Out with it.

The disciple with great delicacy asked: "Sir, I was thinking that if you can teach me some method by which the mind becomes calm within a short time, by which I may be immersed in meditation quickly I will feel much benefitted. In the round of the world's work, I feel it difficult to make the mind steady in meditation at the time of spiritual practices."

Swamiji, observing the great humble earnestness of the disciple, felt pleased. In reply he told the disciple affectionately, "After some time come to me when I am alone upstairs. I will talk to you about it."

The disciple was elated with joy and repeatedly took the dust of his feet. After a while Swamiji went upstairs.

In the meantime, the disciple started a hot discussion with a Sadhu about Vedanta and made the Math resound with the argumentation and refutation of the dualistic and monistic views of Vedanta. Hearing the noise Swami Shivananda said, "Carry the discussion a little slowly, otherwise such loud shouting will disturb Swamiji in his meditation." On hearing it the disciple became composed and finishing the discussion went upstairs to Swamiji.

Coming up the disciple found that Swamiji was sitting in meditation, facing the West. His face is full of wonderful expression, and so benign and placid as if the lucent rays of the moon are playing about it. His whole body is completely motionless, like a painted picture. The disciple stood by, looking on the figure of Swamiji in meditation with speechless wonder, and when even after standing long he found no sign of external consciousness in Swamiji he sat noiselessly by. After half-an-hour, a tittle of the return of external consciousness began to appear. The disciple found that his folded hands began to quiver and five or seven minutes after Swamiji opened his eyes and looking at the disciple said—"When did you come?"

Disciple.— I have come sometime before.

Swamiji.— Very well, get me a glass of water.

The disciple hurriedly brought a glass of water from the vessel, and Swamiji drinking a little asked the disciple to put it back in its proper place. The disciple did so and again sat by Swamiji.

Swamiji.— To-day my meditation was much concentrated.

Disciple.— Sir, teach me so that my mind may also get absorbed in meditation.

Swamiji.— I have told you all the methods before. Meditate everyday accordingly and in the fulness of time you will feel like that. Now tell me, what do you like to do?

Disciple.— Sir, I practise every day as you have told me, still my meditation does not attain much concentratedness. Sometimes I think it is fruitless for me to practise meditation. So I feel that I shall not fare well in it, and therefore now desire only eternal companionship with you.

Swamiji.— Those are weaknesses of the mind. Always try to get absorbed in the eternally present Atman. If once you get the vision of the Atman, you get everything—the bonds of birth and death will be broken.

Disciple.— You bless me to attain it. You told me to come alone to-day, so I have come. By some means, make my mind steady.

Swamiji.— Meditate whenever you get time. If the mind once enters the path of *Sushumna*, everything will get right. You will not have to do much after that.

Disciple.— You encourage me in many ways. But shall I be blessed with a vision of the Truth? Shall I reach freedom by attaining true knowledge?

Swamiji.— Yes, of course. Every body will attain *mukti* (freedom) from the womb to Brahmapurusha, and will you alone fail? These are weaknesses of the mind; do not even cherish them in the mind.

After this he said again: Be possessed of Sraddha (faith), of Virya (courage), attain to the knowledge of the Atman, and sacrifice your life for the good of others—this is my wish and blessing.

The bell for the meal ringing, Swamiji asked the disciple to go and partake of it.

The disciple, prostrating at the feet of Swamiji, prayed for his blessings. Swamiji putting his hand on his head blessed him and said, "If my blessings be of any good to you, I say, may Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna give you His Grace! I know no blessing higher than this." After meals, the disciple did not go upstairs to Swamiji, for he retired early that night. Next morning the disciple had to return to Calcutta in the interests of his profession. Therefore, quickly washing his hands and mouth he appeared before Swamiji upstairs.

Swamiji.— Will you go now?

Disciple.— Yes, Sir.

Swamiji.— Come again next Sunday.

Disciple.— Yes, certainly.

Swamiji.— Come then, there is a boat coming plying on hire.

The disciple departed taking his parting from Swamiji for the life. He still does not know, that this is his last meeting with his Ishtadeva (chosen Ideal) in physical body. Swamiji with a glad heart bidding him farewell said, "Come on Sunday." The disciple replying, 'Yes, I will come' descended downstairs.

The boatmen were calling for him, so he ran for the boat. Boarding it he saw Swamiji pacing the upper verandah, and saluting him he entered the boat. In the strong current of the ebb-tide the boat reached Alheeretola Ghat within an hour.

Seven days after this, Swamiji passed away from mortal life. The disciple had got no inkling or a premonition of it. Getting the news on the second day of his passing away he came to the Math, and therefore he had not the good fortune to see his physical form again.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE Pra Buddha Bharata enters on the twenty-seventh year of its existence, and we offer to all our readers, contributors and subscribers our warmest greetings and wishes for the new year. In trying to carry out, and give expression to, the message of our religion as interpreted by the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda it has tried to explain some of the master ideas of our culture in terms of the present mode of thought and show how they present very fruitful views of life and constitutes the eternal truths of our being which cannot be ignored. For what we need most now is a disentangling of the salient ideas of culture, amidst the variety of their involved applications, the establishment of the norms of our cultural life. A true and right appreciation of ourselves, our cultural past, is an indispensable requisite of our mental equipment at the present day. For only if we have a large vision, see the broad base on which our culture is built, its characteristic life-deductions and its way of arriving at its goal, we will be able to finish the superstructure of our national life and civilisation, where it was arrested and unfinished, with a splendid construction. Swami Vivekananda used to say that the building of our national life is broad-based on the eternal Truth and set to a spacious alignment by the Rishis, who were the creators of its ideals and forms, and saw far into the future, but that the progress of the building was arrested, and therefore it now looks so hideous and dilapidated. Only if we grasp the central truths and their way of realisation in life, which our culture is meant to subserve,

shall we possess that assured vision and faith to resist all overtures that come to us, during our temporary eclipse, to sidetrack us off the path of our evolution to ways of life and thinking, which, however tempting for our immediate prosperity, are daily found to be insufficient to arrive at the highest truths of human life or give any secure base for human progress. The one central fact which Swami Vivekananda so often reiterated that Religion and spirituality are the leading principles of our civilisation and life-organisation, that all other pursuits are secondary and helping first to its unfoldment and then fill with its richness and wealth of spiritual values all life and activities, is one which is now being affirmed with greater emphasis by the best of Indian thinkers; but it has not gained universal acceptance or any certitude and clarity of vision which will make it a creative force in life, and therefore needs to be repeatedly affirmed. For we are still obsessed by a mere political or economic solution of our problems (to which an interest in Religion is regarded as antithetical and subversive) to bring ourselves into line with the powerful nations of the West, with their material limitation, or at least, concentration of view. Therefore one meets with such panacea proposed by even some of our recognised leaders of thought as the suppression of spirituality as tending to weaken the force of the gospel of life, an intensive turning to the study of experimental sciences and their applications, and, in the economic sphere, an endeavour to raise the standard of living indefinitely in order to keep up the struggle of life

to a feverish heat which will alone ensure an increasing progressiveness in material life. There is an element of truth in these views, but without being seen in the light of man's Spirit and his ultimate destiny and giving only a material formulation of his method of progress, it not only retards his real advancement and but obscures his whole view and tends to greater obscuration and un-enlightenment. The truth is that man being a Spirit involved in Nature and he must take advantage of nature and its laws and utilities to raise himself above it and liberate his Spirit,—that in a state of imperfection he must grow in Nature and take help of its truths and laws and develop their spiritual values and gradually lift himself to the level of the comprehensive Spirit. But when losing hold of the key, material life is pursued for its own sake, it gives rise to the monstrous creations of human greed, love of power, egoism in the forms of the overblown industrialism, commercialism, nationalism, etc. Instead of being the labour of the Spirit on earth seeking for the spiritual terms and significance of life, the laws and secrets wrested out of Nature become dangerous weapons in the hands of man's undegenerate nature by which he kills the seed of Divinity at his heart. Just as in the spiritual realm, the powers that come to the practicants in the path of Yoga are beneficent powers when the goal is reached in Samadhi, but become dangerous side-issues and obstructions below that level in the state of imperfection; so the powers of Nature and their applications to industry, have armed man with weapons, but not knowing their subordination and regulation by a higher goal in life he has made a grievous abuse and exaggerations of them thus obscuring his view of the Highest

as a result of all his labour on earth. The just balance of the spiritual and material forces it is necessary to maintain in human society, if it is to be made a training ground of souls growing to the Spirit. For the perfected souls such compromise and counter-poise of apparently opposing forces are not necessary and have no meaning, for they have reached the wholeness of the Self, to whom the whole world is deified and divinised and who can take any path as the instrument of self-expression and intuitively in the proper rhythm, without it being a cause of ignorance. For as we have learnt from the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, true spirituality is not so much world-shunning as world-enlightening. It may recognise the need of a temporary turning away from certain objects in order to break a present persistent pre-occupation, but ultimately it returns to life to see everything in a deified vision, to see God in everything. Therefore the spiritual teachers, although themselves perfect, recognise the need of material, economic life for souls in a state of imperfection, and try to make them proper steps for rising to a spiritual perfection. In order that they may so serve their purpose, the material, social, political life must not be allowed to usurp the premier place of Religion which is the ultimate goal, giving unity and proper subordination to them. Therefore the present overblown constructions of industrialism, militarism, or other mechanisms of life do not represent the high water-mark of human achievement, or the last word of human progress, but much rather its monstrous exaggerations and defections and are doomed to die on their own soil or be reduced to saner proportions. Least of all, India which has so long

kept its soul unstained by these, will go in for them in their exaggerated forms in the rage for modernism and transform itself in its image.

It is not meant that the present phase of civilisation, its characteristic forms and institutions, have contributed nothing which is of permanent value to the human soul, or its need of labour and progress on earth, but rather that its exaggerations and unhealthy excesses have given a wrong trend to human life. Science, by its discovery of Nature's laws and their application to life, has brought together into closeness and unity the whole of mankind, which has made it possible for man to recognise that his problem is the problem of all mankind. It makes us see that everywhere it is the same human heart under the impulsion of the same joys and hopes, and faced by the same problem. By flooding the mind of men with the light of unfettered reason and by the exchange of thought it has made us see the innumerable points of contact between different races and brought about a sort of intellectual sympathy, of a feeling of unity amidst the diversity of racial manners, traditions, ways and ideals of life. By the application of scientific truths to life it has brought about the possibility of life with all the reasonable wants supplied with greater ease, and without the necessity of fighting and deprivation of others. It has given a secure basis for material life which is man's first condition and indispensable environment in progress. If these results had been preserved and their fruits allowed to be reaped in life, without being abused, thwarted, nullified by man's greed, egoism, love of power, and earth-hunger, it would have made the spiritualisation of human life possible. It

has at least brought about a physical unity and an intellectual closeness with all their many consequences in life on which a spiritual unity could have been more easily built and the collective advancement of humanity aided. But unaccompanied by any influx of spirituality controlling his cosmic tendencies, these truths and powers of Nature and their applications have been turned to the grievous bondage, exploitation and obscuration of man, thus throwing back the progress of humanity.

Everywhere and on all sides, the torturing consciousness of the need of a delivering spirituality, of spiritual forms of thought, living, and acting is felt. For only by that will all the gains of the present age be conserved and made to serve the soul of humanity. So we too when we are out to build a noble superstructure of national life of a proper counterpoise between spiritual, and economic and political life, must build on the rock-foundation of a spiritual destiny of man. A great spread of religion and a building-up of its truth and power in our lives is necessary if we are at all to serve the race and humanity at the present crisis. Religion is not a defunct power, which is used up and exhausted and cast on the scrap-heap, but it is just now beginning to influence humanity deeply and penetrate into every pore of society, shaping all its activities in its image. So a great spread and practice of the great and universal ideas and truths of our Religion is an indispensable necessity of our times and it is to this work of propagation, elucidation and application to life that the Prabuddha Bharata will address itself. For the words of Swami Vivekananda come back again and again to the mind as the years pass: "Let them talk of India's regeneration as they like; let me tell you as

one who has been working—at least trying to work,—all his life, that there is no regeneration for India until you be spiritual. Not only so, but upon that depends the welfare of the whole world."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

Continued from page 275, Vol. XXV.

We have narrated above that Narendranath was born with wonderfully holy Samskaras (tendencies). Therefore experiences of a kind different from the ordinary, had come to his life before this. The reader will understand if we narrate a few for examples; Narendranath said: "All my life, closing my eyes to sleep, I would notice a wonderful spot of life in the place between the eye-brows and observe its changes of form with undivided attention. In order to be able to observe it more carefully, I would sleep in the position in which people touch the ground with their head while prostrating in salutation. That wonderful spot of light would change in diverse colours, and growing bigger will gradually assume the form of a globe of light, and ultimately bursting would fill my body from head to feet with a white liquid light. And thus losing the waking consciousness, I would fall asleep. I knew that everybody fell asleep that way, and had that idea for long. Growing up when I started practising regular meditation, on my shutting the eyes the spot of light would in the very beginning come in front, and I would

concentrate my mind on that. On the advice of Maharshi Devendranath when I was daily practising meditation in the company of some friends, we would discuss among ourselves the experiences and visions we had in the hour of meditation. Then I learnt from their words that they did not see the light and none of them fell asleep in the way above described like me.

"Again from boyhood, I would feel with regard to certain objects, places and persons that I was very familiar with them, or that I had seen them somewhere before. I would try to remember but could not bring back to memory the previous circumstances—but never could I believe that I had not seen them before. Many a time, off and on, it occurred to me. For instance, assembled with my friends, I was discussing about a subject, when some one said something and in a flash it occurred to me—really, I had previously been in this room, sitting with these persons in conversations on this same subject, and then this person had made a similar remark. But by thinking I could come to no conclusion, about when and where I had previously conversed with them before. When I learnt about the doctrine of reincarnation, I thought that perhaps I was acquainted with these places and persons in a previous life and partial remembrance of them came to me sometimes in the above way. Later on I felt that it was not the right conclusion about the subject. Now I think I had seen before my birth, in a series of pictures, the persons and things with which I shall have to be acquainted in this life and remembrance of that, after birth, has from time to time arisen within me all my life.

Hearing from many people about the pure life of Sri Ramakrishna and his

entering into trances Sj. Narendra came to see him. But he never dreamed that any change in life or wonderful experiences would come to him by his meeting him. But compared to the super-physical experiences which came on him on two successive occasions of his coming to Sri Ramakrishna all his previously-felt experiences appeared pale and of little consequence—and in finding the reason of them even his powerful intellect failed in the attempt. Therefore he was in a great fix in coming to a conclusion about Sri Ramakrishna. For he found not a shred of reason to doubt a little about the fact that the wonderful experiences occurred to him by the inscrutable and Divine Power of Sri Ramakrishna and the more he thought about it the more he was immersed in wonderment.

Really, thinking of the wonderful experiences which came to Narendra so suddenly and quickly after his first meeting with Sri Ramakrishna, gives cause for not a little wonder. The Scriptures say that in the lives of men of limited power and capacity such experience (of Advaita in the spiritual realm) comes rarely as the result of a long life of renunciation and self-control and when once they come within their realisation they are captivated by seeing the manifestation of Divine Power in their spiritual preceptor and come to surrender themselves wholly to him. That Narendranath did not do so is the cause of no small wonder and from that one can understand what a high capability he had in the spiritual realm. And because he was of more than ordinary capability in the spiritual realm he did not give himself away by the result of the previous incidents, but keeping himself controlled and collected, he was able to set himself for a long time to examine the wonderful

character and life of Sri Ramakrishna, and find the reason of them. But although not wholly overwhelmed or acknowledging full submission, there is no doubt that he was powerfully drawn to Sri Ramakrishna.

After the day of his first meeting, Sri Ramakrishna, on the other hand, felt a powerful attraction for Narendranath. The noble spiritual teacher, possessed of transcendent perception, meeting a worthy disciple becomes seized with the desire of transmitting to him his whole realisations of the Truth. The depth of that holy desire is immeasurable, and that holy impatience without any reason and devoid of the least trace of self comes only by the will of the Divine in the hearts of the great Teachers possessed of full control and established in the Self. And impelled by that on his meeting with the worthiest disciple, he establishes him in the fearless plane of Brahman and makes him satisfied in the Self and filled with It.

There is no doubt that Sri Ramakrishna was seized with the idea of making Narendranath established in the Brahman by means of Samadhi. Three or four years afterwards when Narendranath had fully surrendered himself to Sri Ramakrishna and praying to him repeatedly to bless him with the experience of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* (the transcendent meditation), Sri Ramakrishna, raising the topic of the above previous incident, told him many times before us thus: "Why? You said on the previous occasion that you have your father and mother whom you have to serve (and hence do not like your mind being gathered into the depths of Samadhi)." And sometimes he would say: "Look, a person died and after death became a ghost. Living alone for a long time, he felt the need of a companion,

and began to search all round. If he heard that anybody died anywhere he ran there, and thought that perhaps he would get a companion. But he saw that by the touch of holy Ganges-water or for any other reason, he got rescued from the life of a disembodied spirit (ghost). Therefore with a broken heart he went back and lived a solitary life again. Thus his need of a companion was never fulfilled. I am in a similar situation. Seeing you, I thought I would now get a companion who would share with me to the full all my spiritual realisations—but you also said that you have your father and mother (which consideration kept you back from the highest spiritual realisation in Samadhi). Therefore I have also failed to secure a companion." Thus mentioning the incident of that day he would make fun and banter with Narendranath many times.

We have related before how Sri Ramakrishna desisted, when Narendra was overcome with fear, on the point of entering Samadhi. On the event turning out like that it is no wonder that he felt a little dubious about what he had felt and seen about Narendranath before. Our inference is that for that reason, on the occasion of the second and the third visit of Narendranath, he overpowered him by his spiritual power and got the truths of his life and mission in the world from him in the state of spiritual trance and felt assured by finding them in correspondence with his previous experiences. If the above inference be right, then we have to understand that Narendranath had not the same grade of Samadhi, on the two days of his visits to Dakshineswar. As a result we find that on the two days he had two different kinds of experiences.

Although he was somewhat assurred as a

result of his examining Narendranath in the above way, it cannot be said that he was fully assured. For he saw, that of the powers, the possession of but one or two of which enables a man to earn a great name and position in the world, Narendranath had eighteenfold. And if Narendranath does not employ them aright in the path of spirituality, by the realisation of the highest truth about God, the world and the destiny of human life, the result would be contrary. Sri Ramakrishna would say, as a result of that defection, Narendranath would only found a new sect or party like other founders and earn only worldly fame, but he would fail to realise and help in the establishment of the universal and catholic truths of spirituality whose propagation is necessary in order to fulfil the needs of the age. Therefore Sri Ramakrishna felt a great enthusiasm in his heart that Narendranath might voluntarily follow in fulness the path of his own universal ideal of spiritual life and realise similar catholic and universal ideals of spirituality. As he would always say—that as only in a small stagnant pool of water, *dal* (weeds) and other rank vegetable growth appear, so also where only partial truths of the spiritual realm are realised as the full, it gives rise to *dal* (sects) or limited and exclusive churches. Impelled by the fear that lest Narendranath, endowed with wonderful intelligence, should stray into a limited path, the great effort that Sri Ramakrishna made to fill him with the whole and comprehensive truth, gives rise to no little admiration.

Therefore we see, after meeting Narendranath, Sri Ramakrishna for many reasons felt a wonderful attraction for him, and so long as he did not feel sure that there was no risk of his stay-

ing into a contrary path, his love did not assume a more easy and composed form. Among the reasons of his wonderful love for Narendranath, we can easily understand some sprang from his wonderful visions about him, some from the fear lest in the spell of the time-influence he would take on himself voluntarily the bondages of family, worldly wealth, name and fame and fail to realise, even in part, the great and noble ideals of his life.

(To be continued).

TEACHER OF PHILOSOPHY OF INDIA.

BY ROBERT H. WILSON.

WHEN the Christian world has been engaged for a century or more in sending its missionaries to India, what is it that the priests of the Hindus are now bringing back to America and England?

The question was put to the Swami Abhedananda, who has recently come to San Francisco and gathered about him a circle of followers known as of the Vedanta Ashrama.

"There is a secret of life not contained in any one religion," said the Swami. "The priests of the Vedanta do not seek converts. They would make clear to every man the spiritual understanding of his own religion."

Among the most enthusiastic followers of the Swami Abhedananda is the wife of a San Francisco clergyman occupying the pulpit of an orthodox church. She says the teachings of the Swami are revelations of a higher Christianity.

With this strange paradox of a priest of the Hindus coming back to teach Christianity to Christians, the views of the Swami take on a peculiar interest.

The greatest of the Swamis to come to America was probably Vivekananda. Abhedananda is his associate and fellow disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, the great modern master of the Vedanta philosophy. It was in answer to a message from Vivekananda that Abhedananda came to San Francisco.

WANDERS 14 YEARS.

The Swami's preparation for the priesthood entailed a period of fourteen years of wandering through India "without purse or scrip," sleeping by the roadside or beneath a tree and talking of the spiritual side of life to those who would listen. He was a monk of that ascetic type common to the early orders in the Christian church. He left his native country after he became recognised as a great teacher and went to London. After several years there he came to New York and a few months ago arrived in San Francisco.

Here is a sketchily reported interview with the Hindu philosopher, touching upon only a few of the high spots in a discussion involving the profounder thought of science, philosophy and religion.

"What is it that you have to say to San Francisco?"

"That the Kingdom of Heaven is within you," replied the Swami with a smile to indicate that he realised the futility of so familiar an answer. The explanation was more complex.

"There is within every human being the self or the soul that may know itself. Thought does not know itself. Behind thought is that which knows thought. Then to open the eyes of those who see but dimly is the mission of Vedanta."

"That raises one of the objections of the West to the ancient philosophies of the Orient," was suggested to the Swami. "They are too contemplative for the activities of modern civilisation."

SEE ACTION IN INACTION.

"We learn," he replied, "to see action in

inaction. That is one of the highest conceptions of which the human mind is capable. Behind inertia is the Knower of All, the source of action."

"But to come down to the problems with which the daily lives of men are surrounded—the conflict between good and evil, the question of heaven and hell—what has the Vedanta to offer?"

"There is neither good nor evil but as a man thinks. Good and evil are two aspects of One which is neither good nor evil, but Absolute."

The Swami's answer was profound and spiritual, but it suggested an age old question :

"There is a natural law in the material world which causes the big fish always to eat the little ones. Will it not always appear evil to the little fish that this is so?"

"But," said the Swami, "it is one of the manifestations of the material world that energy is indestructible. We need only see that the one within who directs energy is imperishable and absolute. The Vedanta philosophy teaches that the source of consciousness cannot be found in matter, but stands independent of it. The life of the little fish merely encounters a change, such as is common to all life."

"Then the life of the individual may at any time be merged in a larger life?"

UNEXPLAINABLE "I"

"Life merges and separates and merges again," explained the Swami, "but the 'I' cannot be explained by any physical law. Electronic vibrations are not conscious of themselves. It is the 'soul' that knows itself and that is indestructible, eternal and immortal. The identity of the soul cannot be lost or merged."

There was more to the discussion, but this much would serve to explain the Swami Abhedananda's view that the form of religion matters little if it carries with it an under-

standing of the secret which lies beneath all religious and philosophic activity.

He ended with a more or less familiar quotation from the Bhagavad Gita :

"If the slayer thinks that he has slain, or if the slain thinks that he is slain, both of them know not that the soul can neither slay nor be slain"—

—Which is of interest to the students of Emersonian philosophy who will recognise the origin of his lines :

"If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again."

—The San Francisco Examiner,

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CLXXVI.

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna !

C. Satis Mukherji,
Gorabazar, Ghazipur.

Revered Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of contrition. I am not leaving this place soon—it is impossible to avoid the Babaji's request. You have expressed remorse at not having reaped any appreciable results by serving the Sadhus. It is true, and yet not true : it is true if you look towards ideal bliss, but if you look behind to the place from which you started you will find that before you were an animal, now you are a man, and will be a god or God Himself in future. Moreover, that sort of regret and dissatisfaction is very good, it is the prelude to improvement. Without this none can rise. He who puts on

a turban and immediately sees the Lord, progresses thus far and no farther. You are blessed indeed to have that constant dissatisfaction preying on your mind—rest assured that there is no danger for you. * * You are a keenly intelligent man, and know full well that patience is the best means of success. In this respect I have no doubt that we light-headed boys have much to learn from you. * * You are a considerate man, and I need not add anything. Man has two ears but one mouth. You specially are given to plain-speaking, and are chary of making large promises—things that sometimes make me cross with you, but upon reflection I find that it is you who have acted with discretion. "Slow but sure." "What is lost in power is gained in speed." However, in this world everything depends upon one's words. To get an insight behind the words (specially, with your economical spirit masking all) is not given to all, and one must associate long with a man to be able to understand him. * * Religion is not in sects, nor in making a fuss—why do you forget these teachings of our revered Master? Please help as far as it lies in you, but to judge what came of it, whether it was turned to good or evil account, is perhaps beyond our jurisdiction. * * Considering the great shock which Girish Babu has received, it will give him immense peace to serve Mother at this moment. He is a very keen-witted person. And our beloved Master had perfect confidence in you, used to dine nowhere else except at your place, and I have heard, Mother too has the fullest confidence in you. In view of these you will please bear and forbear all shortcomings of us fickle boys, treating them as if they were done by your own boy. This is all I have got to say. Please let me know by return of post when the Anniversary is to take place. A pain in the loins is giving me much trouble. In a few days the place will look exceedingly beautiful, with miles and miles of rose-banks

all in flower. Satis says he will then send some fresh roses in water for the Festival. * * May the Lord ordain that your son becomes a man, and never a coward!

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

P. S. If Mother has come, please convey to her my countless salutations, and ask her to bless me that I may have unflinching perseverance. Or, if that be impossible in this body, may it fall off soon!

V.

CLXXVII.

My dear—

I hope you are doing well. Do your own spiritual exercises, and knowing yourself to be the humblest servant of all, serve them. Those with whom you are staying are such that even I am not worthy to call myself their humblest servant and take the dust of their feet.—Knowing this serve them and have devotion for them. Don't be angry even if they abuse or even hurt you desperately. Never mix with women. Try to be hardy little by little, and gradually accustom yourself to maintain the body out of the proceeds of the begging. Whoever takes the name of Ramakrishna, know him to be your Guru. Everyone can play the role of a master, but it is very difficult to be a servant. Specially you should follow S.... Know it for certain that without steady devotion for the Guru, and unflinching patience and perseverance, nothing is to be achieved. You must have strict morality. Deviate an inch from this and you are gone for ever.

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

STORIES OF SAINTS.

(Retold by G.)

V.

THE BAG OF SAND.

IN the early days of Christianity when holy men would dwell in the desert to escape worldly temptations and to give themselves more fully to a contemplative life, a Brotherhood had settled down in a wilderness and through their united efforts had succeeded in making the land fertile. Peacefully they lived there, united by one hope and high purpose,—to serve God in labour and in prayer. In that wild land the Brothers lived their austere lives, content to have left behind them the cares and worries and fleeting joys of the world. Their scanty fare was produced from the soil by their own labour. And nothing from the outside world could interrupt their heavenly contemplations.

But one day, the good abbot of this Brotherhood called the Brethren together on a sad business. One of their little congregation, a young monk, after years of faithfulness, had fallen beneath a sore temptation and committed a grievous sin. What the offence was we are not told, but God's hand had for a moment ceased to hold the Brother and his crime was certified. And now all were called in solemn meeting to decide on the sentence. And wise and learned Fathers from other convents had been called in to assist in the sad performance of the day.

The gloomy tale had been related and discussed and now each in turn was requested to give his judgment.

"Send him from you!" said one, quite confident of the soundness of his advice. "All will be tainted by his staying."

"He has brought on you shame and scorn, let him be as dead!" said another. "He has done harm enough."

But the abbot shook his head. He was willing to punish the youth, but to cast him out, no, that he could not do.

Said another: "Justice must be done. Let all know that he is guilty. Do not spare him. Keep him to hard labour but apart from others. And let no one speak to him."

But the abbot prayed in silence for the fallen soul.

Then said another: "Put him in prison for the rest of his life."

But no one consented to that.

And in his little cell sat the offender, once beloved, now scorned and hated by himself, and as he thought, by all. He asked not for mercy, he did not plead his case; speechless he was and fearless and in despair. He feared not his fate for what greater harm could others do him, more than he himself had done? Thus he waited. But outside the minds were divided. Noon had come and the heavy question remained undecided.

One who had seen him in his cell that morning, shrinking from the gaze of others, tried to defend him. And others were there with sinking hearts and pleading eyes, for they remembered the happy days when the Brother had been dear to all. Others again feeling pity tried to harden their hearts, for, 'pity was not justice.'

And so the sentence remained unspoken.

Then it was decided that they should wait for an old Father, their most honoured and best adviser who dwelled in a desert cave. Older than the rest and wiser, many regarded his words inspired.

And the abbot pale and silent prayed for light. And light was sent, for toiling slowly over the hot desert-road came the wise and holy Father. Many times he halted to breathe and rest, far he carried a heavy load,

Wasted he was and worn, yet strong to aid others. Tried by many conflicts, he had found great peace and his face shone with a brightness that made the Brothers feel that God was by his side.

By reverent love compelled, they went out to meet him and seeing his shoulders bent under the heavy burden, many hands were stretched out to free him from the weight. "Why this burden is too heavy for you to carry?" one said. And the holy Father answered: "Brother, these are sins of mine, I must carry them with me whenever I go to judge another."

Then the abbot with trembling hands raised the load from the Father's shoulders. And looking inside the bag he found it filled with sand. All were silent now, for the best among them had sins as many as the sand-grains in the bag. The abbot looked up to heaven and a sigh of relief escaped his breast. "Lord, I thank Thee, Thou hast shown us the way, Thou alone art able to judge us all!" And hearing this a great heaviness fell from every heart. Yes, God alone can judge man and He is merciful. No longer was pity crushed or love kept back. Some smiled and others wept and their hearts were light and at peace. And some bowed in veneration and others went in all haste to speak words of consolation to the fallen Brother. Hope they brought to his despairing breast. And that evening found him kneeling with the rest in the little chapel of the convent. And instead of sentencing the youth and driving him from them, the Brothers restored him to his former position. And never did the sinner fall again. Repentance had purified his heart and he became a holy example to others.

VIVEKACHUDAMANI.

(Continued from page 284, Vol. XXV.)

**निर्धनोऽपि सदा तुष्टोऽन्यसद्वायो महाबलः ।
नित्यतृप्तोऽन्यभुजानोव्यसमः समदर्शनः ॥५४३॥**

543. Though without riches, yet ever content; though helpless, yet very powerful; though not enjoying sense-objects, yet eternally satisfied; though without an exemplar, yet looking upon all with an eye of equality.

[*Powerful*: The Atman is his wealth, power, and everything.]

**अपि कुर्वन्नकुर्वन्नश्रामोक्ता फलभाग्यपि ।
यरीर्याप्ययरीर्येष परिक्लीतोऽपि सर्वगः ॥५४४॥**

544. Though doing, yet inactive; though experiencing fruits of past actions, yet untouched by them; though possessed of a body, yet without identification with it; though limited, yet omnipresent is he.

**अशरीरं सदा सन्तमिमं ब्रह्मविदं कचित् ।
प्रियाप्रियं न स्पृशतस्तथैव च शुभाशुभे ॥५४५॥**

545. Neither pleasure nor pain, nor good nor evil, ever touches this Knower of Brahma who always lives without the body-idea.

[A reproduction of the sense of Chhandogya VIII. xii. 1.]

**स्थूलादिसम्बन्धवतोऽभिमानिनः ।
सुखं च दुःखं च शुभाशुभे च ।
विद्वस्तवन्धस्य सदात्मनो मुने:**

कृतः शुभं चाऽन्यशुभं फलं वा ॥५४६॥

546. Pleasure or pain, as well as good or evil, affects only him who has connections with the gross body etc., and identifies himself with these. How can good or evil, or the effects thereof, touch the sage who has identified himself with the Reality and thereby shattered his bondage?

तमसा प्रस्तवद्वानादप्रस्तोऽपि रविर्जनैः ।
प्रस्तइस्युच्युते भ्रान्त्या लक्षात्वा वस्तुलक्षणम् ॥

547. The sun which appears to be, but is not actually, swallowed by Rahu is called as swallowed up by people, through delusion, not knowing the real nature of the sun.

[The reference is to the solar eclipse.
Nature.....sun—which is a mass of light.]

तद्वेद्वादिवन्धेभ्यो चिमुक्ते ब्रह्मवित्तमम् ।
पश्यन्ति देहिवन्धूढाः शरीराभासदर्शनात् ॥५४८॥

548. Similarly, ignorant people look upon the perfect knower of Brahman, who is wholly rid of bondages of the body etc., as possessed of the body, seeing but an appearance of it.

अहिनिर्लव्ययनो वाय मुकर्या देहं तु निष्ठति ।
इतस्तत्क्षाल्यमानो यस्तिक्षित्प्राणादायुना ॥५४९॥

549. In reality, however, he rests discarding the body, like the snake its slough; and the body is moved hither and thither by the wind of Prana, just as it listeth.

Discarding the body—ceasing to identify himself with the body.

Like the snake etc.—A reminiscence of Brihadaranyaka IV, iv. 7.

Wind = Vayu, which strictly speaking means 'force,' in which sense Pranas can be called 'Vayu.' There is another reading to the first line अर्हनिर्लव्ययनो वाय सुकर्देहस्तु निष्ठनि—which should be rendered thus "But the body of the liberated man remains like the slough of a snake."

ज्ञोतसा नीयते दाह यथा निमोक्ततस्थलम् ।
द्विवेत नीयते देहो यथाकालापभुक्तिषु ॥५५०॥

550. As a piece of wood is drifted on to a high or low ground by the current, so is his body carried on by the momentum of past actions to the enjoyment of their fruits as they present themselves in due course.

[*Enjoyment*—includes 'suffering' also.]

प्रारब्धकर्मपरिकलिपतवासनाभिः ।
सेसारिवष्वरति भुक्तिषु मुकदंहः ।

सिद्धः स्वयं वसति साक्षिष्वदत्र तृणां
चक्रस्य मूलमित्र लल्पविकल्पश्चन्यः ॥५५१॥

551. The man of realisation, bereft of the body-idea, moves amid sense-enjoyments like a man subject to transmigration, through desires engendered by Prarabdha work. He himself, however, lives unmoved, in the body, like a witness, free from mental oscillations, like the pivot of the potter's wheel.

[*Like.....transmigration*—only apparently. The Prarabdha has no meaning for the Jnani who is identified with the Self. See Slokas 453-463.]

Pivot—which is fixed—on which the wheel turns.]

नैवेन्द्रियाणि विषयेषु नियुक्त एष
नैवापयुक्त उपदर्शनस्तदग्नः ।

नैव कियाफलमपीषदवेद्यते स
स्वानन्दसाम्बूद्रसपानसुमत्तचिन्तः ॥५५२॥

552. He neither directs the sense-organs to the object, nor detaches them from these but stays like an unconcerned spectator. And he has not the least regard for the fruits of actions, his mind being thoroughly inebriated with drinking the undiluted elixir of the Bliss of Atman.

[For स्वानन्द in the last line of the Sloka, there is another reading सामत्त which should be translated as "including all minor joys."]

लक्ष्यालक्ष्यगति त्यक्त्वा यस्तिष्ठत्केष्टलात्मना ।
शिव एव स्वयं साक्षादयं ब्रह्मवित्तमः ॥५५३॥

553. He who, giving up all such considerations as this is a fit object of meditation and this is not, lives as the Absolute Atman, is verily Shiva Himself, and he is the best among Knowers of Brahman.

[*Fit object*—and therefore to be welcomed, while the other is to be shunned.]

जीवंश्व सदा मुक्तः रुतायो ब्रह्मवित्तमः ।
उपाधिनारादप्रसंघ सत्र ब्रह्माप्यति निर्देयम् ॥

554. Through the destruction of the supervening adjuncts, the perfect Knower of Brahman merges himself in the One Brahman without a second—which he had been all along, becomes very free even while living and attains the consummation of his life.

[*Merges himself in Brahman which.....all along अहंक सत्त्व ब्रह्माव्यति*]—Quotations from Brihadāraṇyaka IV. iv. 6.]

५४४ तूरो वेपसद्ग्रावाभावयोश्च यथा पुमान् ।
तथैव व्रह्मिच्छेषुः सदा व्रह्मेव नापरः ॥५४४॥

555. As an actor, when he puts on the dress of his role or when he does not, is always a man, so the perfect Knower of Brahman is always Brahman and nothing else.

यत्र क्वापि विरीर्णि मन्तपश्चामिव तरोर्वपु पततात्
ब्रह्मभूतस्य यतेः प्रागेव तच्चिदग्निना दग्धम् ५४५

556. Let the body of the Saṇṇyasin who has realised his identity with Brahman, become withered and fall anywhere like the leaf of a tree, (it is of little consequence to him, for) it has already been burnt by the fire of Knowledge.

[*Burnt etc.—hence he need not even care about the cremation of the body after death.*]

सदात्मनि ब्रह्मणि तिषुते मुनेः
पूर्णाद्वानन्दमयात्मना सदा ।
त देहकालाद्युचितप्रतीक्षा

त्वर्ज्मांसविद्विषण्डविसर्जनाय ॥५४७॥

557. The sage who always lives in the Reality—Brahman—as Infinite Bliss, the One without a second, does not depend upon the customary considerations of place, time etc. for giving up this mass of skin, flesh and filth.

[He may give up the body any time he pleases, for it has served its purpose.]

देहस्य मोक्षो नो मोक्षो न दग्धस्य कमण्डलोः ।
अविद्याद्वयग्रन्थिमोक्षो मोक्षो यतस्ततः ॥५४८॥

558. For, the giving up of the body is not Liberation, nor that of the staff and water-bowl, but Liberation consists in the destruction of the heart's knot, which is—Nescience.

[*Staff and water-bowl—the insignia of a Saṇṇyasin. Mere outward giving up is nothing; they must have no place in the mind.*]

[*Heart's knot—to bind as it were the Chit or Absolute Knowledge to the inert body.*]

कुल्यायामय नद्यां वा शिवदेवेऽपि च चरेः ।
पर्णे पतति चेतेन तरोः किं तु शुभाशुभम् ॥५४९॥

559. If a leaf falls in a small stream, or a river, or a place consecrated by Shiva, or in a crossing of roads, of what good or or evil is that to the tree?

[*Places of varying purity are meant.*]

पत्रस्य पुष्पस्य फलस्य नाशव-
देहेन्द्रियप्राणधियां विनाशः ।
नैवात्मनः स्वस्य सदात्मकस्या-
तन्दाकुर्वत्त्वदस्ति चेष्टः ॥५५०॥

560. The destruction of the body, organs, Pranas and Buddhi is like that of the leaf or flower or fruit (of a tree). It does not affect the Atman, the Reality, the Embodiment of Bliss—which is one's true nature. That survives, like the tree.

Pranas—Vital forces. *Buddhi*—the determinative faculty, may stand here for the mind itself.]

प्रक्षानघन इत्यात्मक्षणि सत्यसूचकम् ।

अनूद्यौपाधिकस्यैव कथयन्ति विनाशनम् ॥५५१॥

561. The Srutis, by setting forth the real nature of the Atman in the words, “the Embodiment of Knowledge” etc., which indicates Its Reality, speak of the destruction of the supervening adjuncts merely.

[“Essence of Knowledge” &c.—Brihadāraṇyaka IV. v. 13: “As a lump of salt which is without interior or exterior, whole, one, homogeneous salt mass, so is verily this Atman, O Maitreyi, the

Embodiment of Knowledge which assumes differentiations through contact with the elements and ceases to have them when these elements are destroyed (by Illumination). After this dissolution It has no distinct name." It should be noted that the passage in the original is so worded as to confuse an ordinary enquirer, as it did Maitreyi actually. Then Vajnavalkya had to explain that he meant only the destruction of the supervening adjuncts, and not that of the Atman—the Eternal Reality—which ever is.

Supervening adjuncts—Such as water in which the sun is reflected, or the rose which casts its reflection on the crystal, or the air which produces a bubble on the surface of water. When these Upadhis are removed the special differentiations cease to exist, but the principal thing remains as it was.]

अविनाशी वा अरेयमात्मंति श्रुतिरात्मनः ।
ब्रह्मात्मविनाशित्वं विनश्यत्सु चिकारिषु ॥५८२॥

562. The Sruti passage, "Verily is this Atman Immortal, my dear," mentions the immortality of the Atman in the midst of perishable things that are subject to modification.

Sruti- Brihadiranyaka IV. v. 14: "Verily is this Atman immortal, my dear, indestructible by Its very nature."

पाषाणावृक्षतुग्राधान्यकड़ुन्नराशा
दग्धा भवन्ति हि मुद्रेन यथा तथैव ।
देहेन्द्रियासु मनभावि समस्तहश्यं
ज्ञानान्विदग्धमुपयाति परात्मभावस ॥५८३॥

563. Just as stone, tree, grass, paddy, and husk etc., when burnt, are reduced to earth (ashes) only, even so the whole objective universe comprising the body, organs, Pranas, Manas and so forth, are, when burnt by the fire of Realisation, reduced to the Paramatma (Supreme Self).

(To be continued).

LIFE.

I am a bird which has been trapped by five falconers, the senses, who are greedy for my Spiritual Being. I am captured by things,—that like strange thieves have stolen me from me. The Plumage of My Soul,

But then I flitted down from heights celestial into the caverns of this earthly life. I descended from unspeakably glorious heights into the dark shadows of this nether world.

I moan for My Mate, Who is the Larger Self of my life, He Whom they call God. I moan but I know that this is a terrible cage. It is so big. O! the whole world can easily be placed inside it. It is so tight and so strong that if even the world fell against it, it would not give way.

This is a terrible cage, and stealthy must have been my trappers. But I can never sing again. That is sure. How could I, when I know that all my life has been stolen from me and that I have been dispossessed of all my glories. O caged, caged in a net of finite things! But in myinnost nature I am one with The Great Bird who rests on the top of the world and remains firmly seated in its Great Nest, though the tree of life sway to and fro and with terrible, swift motion.

I am downcast and forlorn. The stars do not interest me, nor the so-called glories of the day. The sun's rays seem but a paltry light, for I know there is another Light. O! this misery shall kill me. I must fly out of the world, but then when I desire to fly, I find that the winds of life mock me as I beat against the Cage.

Only My Mate, who is the Largest Self of my life, who is my God, can save me.

But when shall He fly to my assistance?
 "When shall He make haste to help me?"
 O cruel, cruel falconers of Sense why have
 ye wounded my Being with the Arrows of
 life and why have ye trapped me into this
 cage of the world!

F. A.

RADHA'S LAMENT.

O Trees, Where is my Krishna? He's not come,
 Alas, promised but did not, and my heart is undone.

And Thou Jamuna of silvery sheeti,
 Thy sylvan bower, tryst of Krishna's love,
 Are they too love-loin, my riv'rain queen,
 Agloom without Madhava?

O shrubs and creepers and cypress stately,
 Ye flowers and foliage, grass off glee,
 All ye are sighing, crying and dying innately,
 For my heart's Hero Keshava to see.

O Ye Earth and hills and dales yonder,
 Ye silent Moon, do ye know where Hari has bied,
 Ye all-pervading Vayu, tell me, don't rend my
 heart asunder,
 Anywhere Ye My Mohan have espied?

But vain did Love yearn and pant and pale,
 Mysterious Murari but her heart did play,
 The All-seeing Vibari Himself did sport and revel,
 When Radha unmet-of Krishna like lifeless lay.

But lo! When Radha so love-sick fell aswoon,
 Krishna in trailing glory shone soon,
 And His All-Self dispelled her delusion of
 being alone,
 And made her for evermore at-one.

MELCHAND DROMAL.

I WANDERED THROUGH A MOUNTAINOUS RETREAT.

I wandered through a mountainous retreat
 into a silent and sequestered place in an
 effort to forget the ways of men and know
 the ways of God. I felt unrelated to my
 age and the conduct of my age palled on me
 for it lacked all the sweetness and the soul
 of poetry. It loved and lived the dead, dull
 things that cheapen life and make shop-
 keepers of men who should be Gods.

I had felt for a tremendous time that
 life should be a long, continuous and divine
 out-reaching to the Heart of life itself, that
 it should be natural, simple and as beautiful
 and as lovely as the rose or forest, the
 rolling ocean or the painted cloud.

I had communed with Nature for years
 before I thus wandered through a mountainous
 retreat into a silent and sequestered place in a supreme effort to forget the ways
 of men and know the ways of God. And the
 Supreme Soul of Nature into whose Being
 flow with instinctive longing all the lesser
 loves and souls and forms of life had urged
 me on saying,

"Self of my Self who yearnest for the
 things that the poet sees and loves but
 partially, thou who yearnest for the Life of
 love itself and for the Life of all that has
 formed itself into the beautiful, into the sub-
 limely true and good, know that no single age
 or time can e'er make thee know or feel the
 Greatness and the Singleness of God.

"The life of the man who loves the world
 for the world's own sake and not for God,
 is too complex to be truly beautiful. Only
 he who searches and finds the Infinitely
 Simple, the Supremely Single in which all
 the world with all its varied and complex
 expression loses itself into a glorious single
 form which is the form of God—only he is
 wise.

Know that no single desire can of itself give thee that happiness Supreme which is thy soul's own bliss and for which thy soul must first know and love itself e'en as it knows and loves and dies for lesser things in its present and untutored stage."

After this blessed message which the Heart of Life had given to mine own heart of hearts I felt that I had been initiated into the Solemn and the Ominous Mystery of the Ages through Whose Veiled Splendours shone in Shadowed Glory the Presence for which man searches wide but which he misses--the Presence he has called God.

I lingered for many a year with Nature wandering through a mountainous retreat into a silent and sequestered place in an effort to forget the ways of men and know the ways of God. Slowly and surely did I begin to realise that nothing in the world which men love could give me That for which I sought, for God is the Reality behind the appearance of the World. The world is a curtain which man not God has woven before the Face of The Most Beautiful Thing in Life.

F. A.

REVIEWS.

Rabindranath Tagore. -A study of his Later works.
by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri. S. Ganesan & Co.,
Triplicane, Madras. PP. 226. Price Rs. 2.

This is one among the many works which are coming out to interpret the writings and bring out the message of the great poet with regard to the various subjects which his master-mind has touched. The poet writing under the impulse of aesthetic excitement creates forms of beauty to give delight to the soul, and is under no necessity to argue out any system of thought or present any message to the understanding of man. So even Tagore's prose writings in which he strives to definitely set forth a view of art or an attitude towards creation float in such an atmosphere of the infinite suggestiveness of the poetic expression,

charged with imaginative phrases and images, that their definite statement is swallowed in the ring of a poetic atmosphere. Therefore an expression and definite statement of the thought-contents of the poet helps his readers to follow with a more understanding interest and appreciation all the forms of his poetic expression.

The standpoint of the author of this book has been no other than an interpretation to reveal the true inwardness of Tagore's mind and moods—collecting all his later works and interpreting them as a synthetic and harmonious whole. In this work we think the author has succeeded well within a very small compass. We will try to pass this synthetic collection under a still shorter review, insufficient as a whole statement, but sufficient to arouse the reader's interest in the beauty and force of Tagore's writings.

The first book studied is "My reminiscences" of Tagore, which contains the self-revelation of the growth and efflorescence of a rare poetic genius and a rare spiritual personality. It consists of a series of memory pictures about which Tagore himself says : " Thus over life's outward aspect passes the series of events, and within is being painted a set of pictures. The two correspond but are not one.....Why the ever-busy painter is painting ; when he will have done, for what gallery this pictures are destined who can tell?....I then discovered, as I opened the door, that Life's memories are not Life's history, but the original work of an unseen Artist.....The variegated colours scattered about are not reflections of outside lights, but belonging to the painter himself, and come passion-tinged from his heart."

Tagore thus speaks of the sense of mystery which filled the world in his childhood's days. " Looking back on childhood's day the thing that recurs most often is the mystery which used to fill all life and world. Something undreamt of was lurking everywhere, and the uppermost question every day was ; Then, oh ! , when would we come across it ? It was as if nature held something in her closed hands and was smilingly asking us ; ' What would you think I have ? ' What was impossible for her to have was the thing we had no idea of."

He thus speaks of a feature of the social life of Bengal of his time, the pleasure of mutual meeting,

"The faculty our predecessors had of becoming the centre of groups and gatherings, of starting and keeping up animated and amusing gossip, has vanished." How true as true as it is bitter - is what he says: "In those days everything from furniture to festivity was designed to be enjoyed by the many, so that whatever of pomp or magnificence there might have been did not savour of hauteur. These appendages have since increased in quality, but they have become unfeeling, and know not the art of making high and low alike feel at home." Tagore thus pleads for freedom in the life of boyhood saying full freedom, "was as necessary for my soul after its vigorous repression during infancy as are the monsoon clouds after a fiery summer..... This experience of mine has led me to dread not so much evil itself, as tyrannical attempts to create goodness. Of positive police, political or moral, I have a wholesome horror."

Love of country and genuine patriotism was a prominent feature of the Tagore family: "From an outside point of view many a foreign custom would appear to have gained entry into our family, but at its heart flames a national pride which has never flickered..... Our educated men then kept at arms' length both the language and thought of their native land. Nevertheless my elder brothers had always cultivated Bengali literature."

Tagore's visit to Europe as a student of Law gave him opportunities to study English life and he thus describes Mrs. Scott's devotion to her husband: "In all her actions her reverence for her husband was the one thing that stood out. The memory of her sweet self-abnegation makes it clear to me that the ultimate perfection of all womanly love is to be found in reverence; that where no extraneous cause has hampered its true development woman's love naturally grows into worship." He characterises a trait of English literature: "In the social life of Englishmen passionate outbursts are kept severely in check, for which very reason, perhaps, they so dominate their literature..... And for this, the fact that in English literature the reticence of true art has not yet appeared is responsible."

The characteristic appeal of India and Western music is thus indicated: "European music seems to be intertwined with its material life, so that the text of its songs may be as various as that life it-

self..... For our melodies transcend the barriers of everyday life, and only thus can they carry us so deep into Pity, so high into Aloofness, their function being to reveal a picture of the inmost inexpressible depths of our being, mysterious and impenetrable, where the devotee may find his hermitage ready, or even the epicurean his bower, but where there is no room for the busy man of the world... It (western music) seemed to me so romantic.... What I would refer to is the aspect of variety, abundance, of the waves on the sea of life, of the ever-changing light and shade on their ceaseless undulations. There is the opposite aspect—of pure extension of the unwinking blue of the sky, of the silent hint of inmeasurability in the distant circle of the horizon."

The poet had a new self-revelation which deepened his poetic vision. Says he: "One morning I happened to be standing on the verandah looking that way. The sun was just rising through the leafy tops of those trees. As I continued to gaze all of a sudden a covering seemed to fall away from my eyes, and I found the world bathed in a wonderful radiance, with waves of beauty and joy swelling on every side. This radiance pierced in a moment through the folds of sadness and despondency which had accumulated over my heart and flooded it with this universal light. The very day the poem, *The awakening of the waterfall*, gushed forth and coursed on like a veritable cascade. The poem came to an end, but the curtain did not fall upon the joy-aspect of the universe..... From infancy I had seen only with my eyes, I now began to see with the whole of my consciousness..... I could see the fathomless depths of the eternal spring of joy, from which numberless sprays of laughter leap up throughout the world."

It would take us out of limits to quote from all the imaginative passages in which the poet discloses his penetrative vision into things and subject, so we close this chapter with a quotation as to why he stood aloof from the noisy elements of political movements: "My mind refused to respond to the cheap intoxication of the political movements of those days, devoid, as they seemed, of all strength of national consciousness, with their complete ignorance of the country, their supreme indifference to the real service of the motherland."

The next study is Shantiniketan, by W. W.

Pearson, which describes the origin the ideals and methods of the new type of school which Tagore sought to build up at Bo'pur. The poet thus describes his consciousness of the place of forest Ashramas in Indian cultural life and education : "The greatest teachers in ancient India, whose names are still remembered, were forest-dwellers. They lived in the bosom of primeval nature, meditated upon the deepest problems of the soul, and made it their object in life to grow in sympathy with all creation and in communion with the Supreme Being. There students flocked round them and had their lesson of immortal life in the atmosphere of truth, peace and freedom of spirit." "These forest sanctuaries have no doubt disappeared but their ideals and method are a light and an inspiration for all time.....In modern India we have to build the ideals of that great age of 'simplicity and wisdom of pure life' into the fair fabric of the future India.....My heart responded to that call and I determined to do what I could to bring it to the surface, for our daily use and purification, the stream of ideals that originated in the summit of our past, flowing underground in the depth of India's soil, the ideals of simplicity of life, clarity of spiritual vision, purity of heart, harmony with the universe, and consciousness of the infinite personality in all creation."

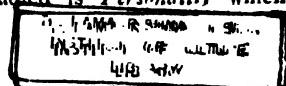
One characteristic of this educational institution is thus described, "The emphasis on efficient and expensive equipment which is a characteristic feature of institution of learning in the West has never been accepted in India, where simplicity of living is regarded as one of the most important factors in true education."

The prominence given to music is another noteworthy feature. The spiritual culture is thus described : "Each boy is induced to acquire the habit of meditation. Mr. Pearson says : 'There is no instruction given as to the method of meditation, the direction of their thoughts being left to the influence of the idea of silence itself and to the Sanskrit texts which are repeated by the boys together at the close of the period of silent meditation. That many boys form the habit of such daily silent worship is enough.' The most attractive and important feature about this ideal school is its general spiritual atmosphere."

The next book studied is *Personality* which

contains six discourses on the interrelation of life's deeper things and of the outer world with the inner universe. The first discourse is on -What is art? The expression of the emotional relation of the personality to the Universe is Art. Indian rhetoricians have laid down that enjoyment is the soul of art and literature, but enjoyment not in vulgar hedonistic sense, but in the sense of bliss, Ananda, the delight-soul of the Universe. Tagore thus describes the origin of the artistic impulse of creation : "When a feeling is aroused in our hearts which is far in excess of the amount that can be completely absorbed by the object which has produced it, it comes back to us and makes us conscious of ourselves by its return waves.This efflux of the consciousness of his personality requires an outlet of expression. Therefore in Art man reveals himself and not his objects." The difference between the world of personality, of emotional thought in which art dwells and the world of science, of impersonal, abstract and mechanical thought which science deals with is thus described. The world of personality is guided by a law - "This law is Reason, which is universal, Reason which guides the endless rhythm of the creative idea, perpetually manifesting itself in its ever-changing forms. Our individual minds are the strings which catch the rhythmic vibrations of this universal mind and respond in mass of space and time." He concludes about the central position of the world of personality by saying : "I have known certainly that the earth and the sky are woven with the fibres of man's mind, which is the universal mind at the same time. If this were not true, then poetry would be false and music a delusion, and the mute world would compel man's heart into utter silence.I live in a world whose life is bound up with mine."

The next book studied is *Nationalism* which is the master principle of human organisation at the present day. A nation is thus described : "A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organised for a mechanical purpose; Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself. It is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being." Therefore the nation is a mechanical organisation and by it in the relations of men in



place of "completeness through union in mutual self surrender," we have elements of wasteful and unnatural conflict. On the chapter of Nationalism in India, the author says: "Our real problem in India is not political. It is social.... I do not believe in an exclusive political interest." But India must not forget her special history. "She has tolerated difference of races from the first and that spirit of toleration has acted all through her history." "For India has all along been trying experiments in evolving a social unity within which all the different peoples could be held together, while fully enjoying the freedom of maintaining their own differences. The tie has been as loose as possible yet as close as the circumstances permitted. This has produced something like a United States of a social federation, whose common name is Hinduism." The poet's message to India in the light of these ideas is thus concluded: "Let our life be simple in its outer aspect and rich in its inner gain. Let our civilisation take its firm stand upon its basis of social co-operation and not upon that of economic exploitation and conflict."

Some miscellaneous works and Dramas are studied of which the Autumn Festival is of great beauty and spiritual significance. The poet's Novels and Stories are studied of which the Runaway appears to us of great beauty. The character of the boy Tara is that of a Nature's child, "His eyes, his limbs, his mind were always on the alert. Like Nature herself, he was in constant activity, yet aloof and undistracted. Every individual has his own fixed standpoint, but Tara was just a joyous ripple on the rushing current of things across the infinite blue."

Among the essays one of the best is the, Message of the Forest, in which the poet emphasises the central fact of man's kinship with Nature as a central idea of Indian thought and traces it through the range of Sanskrit literature, "In India there was no sense of hostility of nature and soul; there was perfect harmony. The world is not a mechanism for the production of results to us; it is Sacchidananda. For us the highest purpose of this world is not merely living in it, knowing it and making use of it, but realising our own selves in it through expansion of sympathy and emancipation of consciousness, not alienating and domi-

nating it but comprehending and uniting with it in blissful union."

This book is a succinct and harmonious review of the later works of Tagore and going through it the reader will get an idea of the writings studied as a harmonious whole.

Bhakti Ka Pantha—by Dharmanand Tripathi. To be had of B. Tripathi & Co., Barabazar, Calcutta. Price 8 annas. A translation into Hindi of the Path of Devotion by Swami Paramananda. The original book contains discourses on the religion of love and the means of acquiring it in life. The translation is well executed and retains much of the spirit of the original. We recommend it to the Hindi reading public.

An Analysis of Prof. J. R. Bury's History of Greece—by T. R. Rajam. Published by the Standard Swadeshi Market, Tiruppathur. Price 10 annas. A short sketch of Prof. Bury's History which is a recognised text-book on the subject for students. It gives a good skeleton of the book which will prove useful to students as an outline for mastering the subject.

REPORTS.

The Third Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Narayangang. (From 1918 - 1920).

The record of varied activities of the above institution in the direction of rendering succour to suffering humanity renders the existence of such institutions an unquestionable necessity. It is a instrument ready at hand which is turned to very good account whenever a cry of distress and voice of help arise in the country, and it furnishes a noble expression for those among the youths of this country who are ideally-minded to their passion for service and self-sacrifice. It is a most fruitful channel of expression of the ancient impulse of spirituality in the land.

We will just note in outline the activities of the Sevashrama Educational : (1) A Free Pathsala, in which fifteen boys are given free education, (2) A library, recently reinforced by a gift of a whole library

and open to the public, (4) Educational stipends to poor students: Charitable work: (1) Outdoor hospital relief, 1008 patients were treated, (2) House to house relief of 184 cases, (3) Relief of helpless patients in the Ry. Station or on the road side, (4) Cremation of the dead, (5) Monetary help in erecting houses, (6) Relief to the aged, the invalid and helpless families, (7) Help with passage money, (8) Relief of epidemic in the town: (9) Muftusil relief works.—On nine occasions when epidemics broke out in different parts of the country the Sevashrama sent out relief parties to alleviate the distress, (10) Relief during the Rice Crisis.—When there was distress on account of scarcity and high prices of rice the Sevashrama helped in the importation and distribution of Burma rice at a less price by opening shops, (11) Cyclone Relief work. When a terrible cyclone swept over the country devastating a large portion of Eastern Bengal, to relieve the distress, the workers prepared the list of sufferers and helped in the distribution of Burma rice at a reduced price. Religious activities include Bhajans, daily worship and study of religious scriptures for the spiritual improvement of the workers and of the public. There was public celebration of the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Such a record of activity reflects much credit upon the workers and the management of the institution and testifies to what an amount of work can be performed by persons infused with the spirit of service in a humble way.

The Ramakrishna Sevak Sampradaya, Cuttack, is doing useful work among the poor students of Cuttack. It was first started in 1906 to look after the moral, intellectual and spiritual welfare of poor students. A boarding house for this purpose was opened in 1909 by the Sampradaya and was named Ramakrishna College, and is maintained by donations and subscriptions. The Society maintains seventeen poor students in a rented house under the guidance of a Superintendent. There is a library attached to the College. The Society is trying to have permanent quarters for which it has collected a sum of Rs. 2,536 out of an estimate of Rs. 5000. The work of the Society is commended by distinguished visitors.

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE Birthday Anniversary celebration of the Swami Vivekananda comes off on the 30th January 1921. The Tithipuja falls on the same day. All centres, branches, and societies, associated with his name are requested to kindly send us the reports of their celebration for insertion in the Swami Vivekananda Number of the P. B.

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In the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, a Weaving School has been opened. A Brahmachari who learnt the industry in the Ramakrishna Weaving School, Kolpara, has taken charge of the teaching. The school has started with six students. Two looms have been set up and wearing clothes and towels are being turned out. One student has joined the school from the Ramakrishna Ashram, Kalna, for learning the hand-loom weaving with the object of establishing a similar weaving institution at Kalna.

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In Silchar Ramakrishna Sevashrama a Night School has been opened which is doing good work. The said institution conducts the monthly "Navajuga" which has a promising future.

—
A department has been opened in the Nivedita Gur's School for the teaching of hand-loom weaving. One lady-teacher is teaching a few girl-students the weaving of cloth and towels. When a few among the students acquire proficiency, it will be possible to teach a large number of students. In these times of economic stress, a spread of this art of weaving among the ladies of the household is desirable. In times of distress due to high price, insufficiency of cloth, they will be able, with a little capital, to turn out clothes, towels at a small cost to meet the needs of the household, or if any surplus is left over, to earn some money by the sale.

—
ON the 31st Dec. corresponding to lunar month of Agrahayan, the 7th day of the dark moon, the Holy Mother of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna was born, sixty-seven years ago. In the holy re-

membrance a special worship was observed in Belur Math and at the Holy Mother's place of residence in 3 gubazar.

The Ramkrishna Mission Famine Relief Work in the district of Puri has been closed. This is the season for the harvesting of one crop. Many will obtain employment. The price of rice has also gone down. The Famine Relief Work at Bhuvaneswar was closed in the month of October, at Kamas and Gausacodar in November. The work at Jenapur in District of Cuttack is still going on in December.

SWAMI Paramananda returned to Boston from his Western tour on October 15th and at once resumed charge of all Services and classes. On Thursday evening, the 21st, he held an informal reception for the students and friends of the Centre. Although it was arranged at the last moment, the rooms of the Centre were full. The first part of the evening was devoted to music and impromptu speeches. Professor Perrin of the Boston University told something of his recent experiences while teaching at the University of Nankin, China. Mrs Spaulding dwelt with warm appreciation on the pervading influence of the Centre, which brought constant blessing into the lives of many who were deprived of the privilege of attendance at the meetings, and Miss Shephered recited one of Longfellow's poems with deep feeling. The Swami spoke at intervals as he called upon the various ones who contributed towards the evening's entertainment. In giving an outline of his Western tour and of the many lecture invitations now coming to him, he showed how rapidly the interest in Vedanta is spreading and how many are the new links being formed between the Centre in Boston and the outside world.

THE Swami's recent visit to Los Angeles, although shorter than usual, proved very fruitful. The numbers at the meetings of the Centre grew very large. The Swami also spoke on one Sunday afternoon at Krotona, the National Theosophical Headquarters, to an overflowing audience. His subject was "The Science and practice of Yoga." A special lecture was arranged at the Hotel Daly

by several prominent ladies of Los Angeles and the keen interest awakened led to a second meeting in one the most beautiful homes of Los Angeles. Another outside lecture was at the Metaphysical Library. The Swami was asked to speak also at the Woman's Suffrage Victory celebration, given by the Friday Morning Club, one of the largest Woman's Club in the United States. He chose as his subject, "Ideal of Womanhood in India."

The Message of the East.

We are sorry to record that Srimati Sudhira, the director of the Nivedita School and the founder and soul of the Girl's Home called Sri Sarada Mandir, breathed her last on Tuesday, the 23rd Nov. '20. 'For the salvation of self and the good of the world'—was the motto of her life-work. She was in her thirty third year, but possessed of such skill in works and firm perseverance, she laid the seed and carried through such great works, as might well be the glorious record of a more prolonged life. Selfless love and divine grace of character were so perfected in her life, as were known only to those who knew her.

During the Puja holidays she in company with some of her colleagues and students visited Hardwar, Rishikesh and other holy places and returned to Allahabad whence he proceeded to Benares to inspect and see to the management of the woman's department of the Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama. On her way, she accidentally fell from the train and became unconscious. She was picked up into the train in an unconscious condition and brought to the Sevashrama, Benares, at 10 o'clock in the night. That night her consciousness did not return, nor the following day, but her condition growing worse, all hope of her recovery was given up. Towards afternoon at about 3 o'clock, her face was suddenly lit up with radiance and assumed divine beauty, and everybody present felt the Divine Mother has taken up her beloved daughter to Herself on the completion of her lifelong service, transfigured as a radiant Goddess.—The Udbodhan.

ERRATA—P. 4, l. 2 for 'twenty-seventh' read 'twenty sixth.' P. 5, l. 31 for 'undegenerate' read 'unregenerate.'

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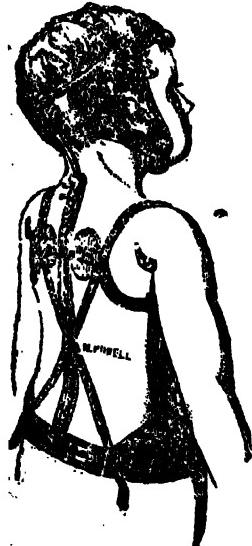
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Katha Upanishad, I. iii. 6.

Vol. XXVI, No. 295, FEBRUARY 1921.

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Kalik Upanishad, 1, vii, 8

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

FEBRUARY 1921

[No. 295

THE BENGALI LANGUAGE,

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(Translated from Bengali.)

All learning in our country from ancient times have been confined in the Sanskrit language, a wide gulf has been created between the learned and the common people. From Buddha to Ramakrishna, all who came on earth for the "general good of many people," taught the common people in the popular language. Scholarship and learning are, of course, excellent; but do they consist in nothing else but in stiff language and an unnatural and wild imagination? Can there be no art in the common and spoken language? What is to be gained by building an artificial language, leaving aside the natural language of speech? You think in your mind about all your scholarly investigations in the language in which you talk at home,—why, then, at the time of writing do you bring out a monstrous and unnatural language? The langu-

age in which you think in your mind about science and philosophy, hold discussion among yourselves—is that not fit for writing on science, on philosophy? If it is not so, then how in that language do you in your mind or among yourselves discuss about these subjects? There can be no language fitter than the one in which we express the feelings of our mind, our love, sorrow, and anger. That mode of feeling and turn of expression have to be employed. That force of language, that terseness capable of expressing much in little, that flexibility, capable of being turned in any direction, can never be obtained in any artificial made-up language. Language has to be made like steel; you can bend it to any shape, yet it does not lose its suppleness. With one stroke it can cut through a rock, yet its edge does not get blunt. Our

language, by imitating the ponderous movement of Sanskrit, has become unnatural. Language is the principal instrument of cultural advance, as also its principal indication.

You may say it is well to say that but different dialects prevail in different parts of Bengal,—which should I accept? That which by a natural way is getting strong and spreading is to be accepted—that is to say, the language of the metropolis, Calcutta. When people from any direction East or West once coming to breathe the atmosphere of Calcutta speak that language, then Nature herself is indicating which language is to be accepted in writing. As there will be more facility of communication, the difference between East and West will vanish and from Chittagong to Badyanath, the one language of Calcutta will be accepted. When I find that the dialect of Calcutta will in a few days be the language of the whole of Bengal, and if the spoken language and written language are to be made one, the wise must accept the Calcutta dialect as the base. In this parochial jealousy has to be allowed to drift away in the current. In a matter constituting the good of the whole country, the supremacy of one's own district or village has to be forgotten.

Language is the vehicle of thought. Thought and feeling are primary, language comes afterwards. Does it look well if you seat a monkey on a horse decked with jewels and diamonds? Look at the Sanskrit language. See the Sanskrit of the Brahmanas, the Mimansa Bhasya of Sabar Swami, the Mahabhasya of Patanjali, and last, see the Mahabhasya of Sankaracharya; and compare with the Sanskrit of the recent times. You will at once understand that when men are alive, they speak a vital language; when life is dead,

they speak a language with the breath of life gone out. The more is the national death imminent, and original thinking gets diminished, the more is the tendency to cover a few hackneyed worn-out thoughts in a mass of flowers and incense. What a great high-flown effort in that direction! After a long string of adjectives, extending over ten pages, comes of a sudden the finis, "राजा विजय" (the king lived)! O! what beauty of involved adjectives, of compounds in forming words, what biting sarcasm!—these are signs of death. When the country was going into decline, these symptoms appeared. This is not confined to language merely, but in all the arts. In buildings, there is neither any expression of idea or a grace of form and the pillars are endlessly carved to no purpose. Ornaments piercing the nose, the neck, dress the wearer into the form of an ogress,—yet how much of carving of leaf and creepers and profuse ornamentation in them! In music, it is difficult to make out whether the singer is weeping or quarrelling; and what the idea, the feeling expressed is, even the Rishi Bharat fails to understand. And how much of involution, laboured complexity in that song! The mass of curves and intricacies in the singing bring out into play the thirty-six nerves of the body.—And add to that, in imitation of the Mahomedan expert singer, the music comes into being by singing through the nose and the teeth pressed close to one other. Now an effort is being made to rectify them and people will understand that that which is without idea, without life—that language, art, or music is of no use as a mode of human expression. Now people will understand that as strength will come into national life, language, art and music will of themselves be filled with

spirit and sincere feeling. Then the amount of ideas which will be expressed in two spoken words will far exceed what is expressed in two thousand set adjectives. Then the very sight of the form of Gods

will awaken *bhakti* in us, the sight of a woman decked with ornaments will appear as a Goddess, and houses, furniture, everything will be overflowing with the pulsations of life.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE controversy is very often carried on that between the Vedanta and modern Christianity there is this irreconcilable difference, that while the former preaches an abstract Absolute, imperturbable and impersonal, incapable of movement and individuality, the God of Christianity is a Personal one, who has created this world as a real creation. This supposed anti-thesis involves a misconception of the two systems of thought and religion. While the modern interpreters of Christianity have failed to carry the implications of the real Christianity as preached by Christ and as recorded in the Gospels to its proper lengths; on the other side, they have kept themselves blind to the immanent aspect of the Brahman. Christianity, according to them, does not preach a transcendent Being, who dissolves into Himself all the realities of the Creation in their real ground in His impersonal world-exceeding Being; Vedanta, according to them, preaches an impersonal imperturbable Absolute, incapable of personality, and having no creative aspect of world-manifestation. Christianity cannot be said to glorify and idealise the world only, for are there not statements in the Bible which speak of the impermanence of the world, and the greater bliss and reality of God, than of the world? The waters of the life of the Spirit should be deemed worthier by a devout

Christian of the Bible than the waters of the worldly life; the Kingdom of Heaven than the kingdom of earth. Why is this anti-thesis and opposition, if Christianity is supposed, according to some of its modern professors, to preach only a human, personal, world-affirming religion? Indeed, if one goes through the Gospels, the impression of a negation of the world, the life a repentance for the getting ready for the kingdom of God is borne in upon him as much as any world-negating book of the Hindus, the Vairagya Shataka of Bhartrihari, for instance.

The real truth is that both the Vedanta and Christianity have a world-negating and a world-affirming aspect, and according to different standpoints these two attitudes are assumed, with reference to the division of the spiritual being of man in creation—man, the divine being fallen into ignorance. Instead of avoiding one side, and trying to condemn statements regarding renunciation as due to a false theory, we should whole-heartedly throw ourselves into the spirit of both and see the wholeness of the truth and being of God manifesting through them. If during one period of human progress one side of the truth e. g. the positive is accepted and turned to account, this does not render the negative side nugatory, for that is still acting for a fruitful action of the

other; otherwise the positive, the affirmative would degenerate into ignorance, the action of the darkened ego, not the action of the Spirit. Individual beings, also, according to the prominent bend of their mind and by inclination, attach themselves to one of the aspects, affirmative or negative, to the exclusion of the other. We contend that such an exclusive division and partition of truth does not exist really, but that these are the two ways in which the whole truth presents itself to man's condition in creation, a separation between the Self and the Ego, the Paramatman and the Jivatman, between the Infinite and the Finite, the Impersonal and the Personal. And we go one step further and say that so long as man will remain in creation these two elements will remain, for the whole mystic phenomena of the universe is the play of these two. But there will be this difference that whereas in ignorance the centre of being was placed in the Finite, the Personal, and the limited Self, it is changed to the Infinite, the Impersonal, and the Universal Self and the other element takes the form of thin demarcation (and not prison-wall) for the play of the Divine Lila.

Therefore the play of the Infinite and the Finite, the Formless and the Formed, the Changeless and Changeful, which constitutes, according to the poet, the whole spiritual significance of the creation, has a spiritual meaning different to their emotional and poetic significance. The difference shows itself clearly when the poet avers that the Absolute in its uncreate, unmanifest aspect is a thin bloodless entity, an abstract without any stuff of reality. Instead of being considered the plenitude, the concentrated essence of reality, it is merely regarded as almost non-existent, showing

that a mere poetic interest in the Absolute misregards the unified homogeneous Illumination, in which all the forms, modes, features of its manifestation is swallowed up in culmination as an oceanic universality of Existence, Bliss and Consciousness. While a poetic interest in the world takes its stand on the finite, draws down the Infinite and Impersonal to relieve, enlarge and uplift the finite significances in the world; it does not penetrate through the deepest folds of the mind to the centre and core of consciousness and look with undazzled eyes into the ocean of Effulgence, where the being is dissolved and words and mind stop, because of being carried to the highest plenitude. This is the state about which the Upanishads say, "There the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars, what to speak of the mortal fire!" But because of this nobody thinks of It as dark and devoid of effulgence, but as the Supreme Light which puts out the lower lights of the sun and the moon, for when they reach the source can their separate existences remain? They are heightened and resumed back into their source, without losing their light, but, on the contrary, by heightening it. Not having reached this unified and homogeneous Illumination, devoid of manifestation in forms and features, and not being accustomed to look at It face to face with undazzled eyes, the poet looks at It in the reflections in the finite and changeful objects, where the dazzle is much diminished to suit the poetic vision. But reaching to the plane of *bhavarajya*, he still brings down the light drenching the mental medium through which It passes, and therefore he is able to uplift his vision of the finite and personal with the universal significance of the Infinite and Impersonal. But still this vision is not central

but near to the heart of existence and truth; there is still a certain exiguity of significance, a flaw of externality as not proceeding from the heart of Reality. The flaw shows itself clearly in that the poet needs external stimulus, the moved feeling worked by suggestion of the outward Nature. Else, in its absence, he is apt to feel dubious about existence of the Reality. His experiences do not spring up from the fountain of existence in some deep cavern of the heart and then tinge with their significance the visible forms of Nature; but they are always dependent on the suggestion, the stimulation of the outward Nature and consequently he comes to recognise a Being which has also such a dependent stipendiary existence on the outward, manifested creation.

The vision of the Seer, on the other hand, starts from the opposite side of our being. His sense of the Infinite, the Universal and Impersonal is true, as he has seen It in Its own source, and as his vision proceeds from the native fountain of Existence he is under no compelling necessity to relate it to the outward, finite objects and changeful aspects of Nature, in order to feel Its existence. He does not confuse the Soul in the manifestation but It exists antecedently to all manifestations. The Seer sees from the highest ground of the Self, down on the life, mind and Nature, bathing them with the light of the Spirit; the mere poet sees from the level of the mind, not of the intellectual, but of the psychic, on the light of the Spirit scattered and diffused on the mental level and in the manifestations of Nature. Therefore in the latter there is not the same sweep and concentration of the vision; therefore his vision although on the way

does not reach to the absolute certitude and security of a spiritual realisation.

Then, if it be said that if the Seer's vision antedates and precedes the visible manifestation it need not relate itself to the visible forms and this mood may develop into an other-worldly intolerance, a world-negating formula.—To this the answer is that although the Seer's vision is not dependent on the outward vision, but comes from the fountain of being, still it is not incapable of taking forms, or finding expression in the visible aspects of manifestation. And because it antedates, and is independent of the latter, it is secure from their limitations and filled with the wholeness of Truth. What, then, it may be asked, is the necessity of its world-manifestations, seeing that it is not dependent on them and contains all their signification within Itself? To this no intellectual answer can be formulated, corresponding to human motives and springs of action. It must be some peculiar variance of Bliss which the Supreme must feel in the world-manifestation, without anything new being added to it from outside, but simply in the form of its self-sundering, without its infinitude being abridged. पूर्ण वृत्तिशब्दं ! The reconciliation between Infinite and Finite, between the One and the Many, this Changeless and Changeful, can only be done in spiritual experience, and no philosophy can bridge this metaphysical gulf. This is truly done when after resuming the whole manifestation into the Being of the transcendent Reality, the creation is seen to proceed from It. This is what is called the *lila*, not in the sense of a whim and a caprice, but in the sense of the variation of a full, Self-possessed, Self-satisfied and an Independent Being,

in the form of its infinite manifestations in the creation, without any of its infinitude and independence diminished. What pleasure a King, possessed of all wealth and honour, feels in personating a beggar and playing in bliss is known only to the King?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

Continued from page 10.

AS a result of long years of renunciation and *tapas*, Ramakrishna's little ego completely vanished and united in being with the Universal Mind, the First cause of the world; he was naturally feeling all work for the good of the world as his own. Influenced by it, he realised that it was the will of the Divine to fulfil the needs of religion of the age through the instrumentality of his mind and body. Again, as a result of that, he understood that Sriji Narendra was not born to fulfil his little selfish ends in life but in great love of the Lord came on earth to help him in the above work for the welfare of the world. Therefore it is no wonder that he should feel the ever-free and self-less Narendra as very near and dear to him and be greatly attracted to him. Thus, though at first sight wonder rises in the mind at seeing the powerful attraction of Sri Ramakrishna towards Sj. Narendra, still on a little reflection it looks very natural and inevitable.

"We feel it is impossible to give even a glimpse of the nearness and depth with which Sri Ramakrishna felt Sri Narendra to be near and dear to him and loved

him with full absorption of the mind. None of the reasons for which a man of the world feels another person to be dear to him and offers him the love of his heart was present here, but yet on meeting with and separation from Sj. Narendranath Sri Ramakrishna felt such deep elation and distress of the heart, that the least trace of it we have not found anywhere else. We did not know before that it was possible for one to love another with such depth and intensity and without any reason. Seeing the wonderful love of Sri Ramakrishna for Narendranath we understood that the day would come when man feeling the presence of the Divine in man would be blessed by loving him with such unselfishness.

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Some time after Narendra came to Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Premananda visited Dakshineswar for the first time. At this time Sj. Narendranath having not visited Dakshineswar for sometime, he (Swami Premananda) was wonder-struck and charmed to observe the great longing with which Sri Ramakrishna was passing his time in order to meet Sj. Narendra. He related to us many times about it thus:

"While boarding the boat at Hatkhola ghat for going to Dakshineswar, with Swami Brahmananda, we met Sj. Rambdayal Babu there. Knowing that he also was going to Dakshineswar, we boarded the same boat together, and about evening reached the Kali Temple of Rani Rashmoni. Reaching Sri Ramakrishna's room, we learnt that he had gone to the temple to see the Image of the Divine Mother. Swami Brahmananda, asking us to stay there, went to the Temple to bring him back. After some time had passed we found him bringing Sri Ramakrishna, holding him carefully and leading him along the way, saying, 'here there are steps to

ascend," "here to descend" etc. Already we had heard of his losing the external consciousness in full absorption in the Divine consciousness. Therefore observing him coming like one intoxicated, with unsteady steps, we understood that he was filled with Divine feelings. Entering the room and sitting on his low bed, he soon came to an easy and natural mood and enquiring about my relations, examined the signs of my hands and feet. Weighing my hand from the elbow to the fingers, and holding it for some time he said, 'good.' What he understood by that way he only knew. Afterwards he enquired of Ramdayal Babu about the welfare of Narendranath and learning he was well said, "He has not come here for a long time, and I have a great desire to see him; please tell him to come one day.

Some hours passed in great joy in talks on religious subjects. When it was 10 o'clock in the night, we sat down to meals, after which we slept in the verandah to the east of Sri Ramakrishna's room and north of the court-yard. Swami Brahmananda slept in the same room with Sri Ramakrishna. Before an hour passed in sleeping, Sri Ramakrishna came out to where we were sleeping outside and addressing Ramdayal Babu said, 'Well, have you slept?' Both of us hurriedly getting up and sitting on our bed said, 'No, Sir.' Hearing it, he said, again, 'See, I am feeling a wringing of my inner being for the sake of Narendra, like the wringing of a wet towel. Please tell him to come and see me. He is a pure form of the *Sattva-guna*, a veritable Narayana, I cannot remain without seeing him now and then.' Ramdayal Babu had been visiting Dakshineswar from some time before, and therefore he was acquainted with the child-like behaviour of Sri Rama-

krishna. Seeing Sri Ramakrishna in that state of mind, he understood that he was in a half-trance, filled with a divine mood. Saying that as soon as it was morning, he would see Narendra and ask him to meet him, he began to console him. That mood of his did not abate that night. Finding that we were being disturbed in sleep, he went away from us to sleep in his bed, but in the next moment forgetting all about it, he came again to us and speaking of the great qualities of Narendranath, expressed the great pain he was feeling at not seeing him. Astonished at finding his great distress, we began to think of his wonderful love, and how hard must be he for whom he was suffering so much. That night passed away. Afterwards when the day broke, we saw the Image in the Temple, and then prostrating at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, took leave of him and returned to Calcutta."

In 1883, one of our friends arriving at Dakshineswar found Sri Ramakrishna very depressed and wistful on account of the absence of Narendranath for a long time. He says, "That day his mind was full of Narendra and only words in praise of Narendra's great qualities were on his lips. Addressing me, he said, 'See, Narendra is full of *Sattva-guna*, I have seen that he is one of the four Rishis on the plane of Akhanda Sachchidananda, and one of the Saptarshis (group of seven great Rishis). His great qualities are unfathomable,'—speaking in this strain he became in a manner impatient to see him, and as the mother weeps for her absent son, so he began to shed tears. Afterwards not being able to control himself in any way and feeling we might think it rather unseemly, he hastily went out towards the northern verandah and we heard him weep-

ing in stifled sobs, saying 'O Mother Divine, I am still here. You have come to see beside me'. The son began to say, 'I am still here, but Narendra did not come. Great pain it not seen, he never comes it is wounding my heart, but he misunderstands nothing of this love for him'. Hearing this he again became impatient and went out of the room. Returning again he began to rebuke himself saying, 'Oh man! why have become so impatient and are weeping for him - what all people think of it?' (Addressing us), 'In no case and the chose I made before you. But in view of it I am anxious to convert myself'. Seeing his great love for Narendra we were astounded and thought that surely Narendra was a God-like personality otherwise why should Sri Ramakrishna feel such attraction for him? Then consoling Sri Ramakrishna we said, 'Yes, Sir it is a song of him that even knowing that you feel such pain in his absence, he is not come'. Sometime after this incident one day he introduced us to Sj. Narendra. A we found Sri Ramakrishna impatient at not seeing Narendra or to see him equally elated on meeting him. Sometime after the above event we arrived at Dakshineswar on the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna. The devotees adorned his body beautifully that day with new cloth and garlands and flowers. The *Arat* song was going on in the northern verandah of the garden. Sri Ramakrishna was sitting surrounded by devotees, listening to the song and becoming filled with religious emotion, sometimes adding line to the song to make the singing successful and expressive. But on account of the heat it was

Narendranath, he was feeling disturbed in his enjoyment of the song. Now and again he was looking round to see if Narendra arrived and was saying, 'Well, Narendra has not come'. When it was mid-day, Narendra arrived and prostrated at his feet in the midst of the assembly. On seeing him his heart leapt up in joy and leaning on him he became over-powered with religious emotions and absorbed in trance. Afterwards regaining his normal mood he engaged himself in talking to and teaching him. So far that day his listening to *Arat* song was uninterrupted.

It fills one with wonder to think of the divine love which Sj. Narendra received from Sri Ramakrishna. Unmoved by it that he still advanced to tell Sri Ramakrishna's love for the sake of the real truth, indicates when great respect for truth he had. On the other side not at all taking offence at that exclamation, Sri Ramakrishna kindly excused himself for scrutiny for the welfare of the disciple and endeavoured to make him realise the high spiritual truth. Thinking of the great humanity of spirit and nobility of mind of his pupil we feel also a wonder-struck. Thus the more we shall study the edition of Sri Ramakrishna and Sj. Narendra with the more shall we find on the one hand, the earnest desire to examine for truth's sake and on the other the readiness in offering his life for the scrutiny of the other and the endeavour to make him realise the truths of spirituality. We will understand moreover how the real Teacher, respecting the feelings and ways of the worthy disciple advances to teach him in his way and finally ends in commanding for ever the place of reverence and worship in the heart of the disciple.

(To be continued).

IS THE HINDU PESSIMISTIC?

An orthodox Hindu, immediately after rising from his bed, has to utter the following Sloka :—

उत्थायांस्या वीक्षयं महायमुपत्यन् ।

मरणाद्याधिशोकानं किमय समविष्टनि ॥

—Oh, to-day a great cause for fear has arisen—out of death, disease or grief, which is to happen to-day!

The robust civilised man here winks with a smile and says—"Oh, the Hindu is pessimistic. Why dwell continually on the dark side of life and be morose and miserable? Look at the progress, look at the bright prospects of life and march on—'heart within and God overhead.' Continually dwelling on these dark pictures, the Hindus, as a nation, have become unprogressive, fatalistic and unfit for the struggle for existence—which is the sole law of progress! A robust optimism is the only medicine that can be prescribed for this curious malady of the Hindu heart. Society, civilisation and everything that is good and noble in humanity will perish, if one indulges in this sort of meditation every day—and asceticism and all its concomitant evils will be the only result."

Let us see if the Hindu has any answer to these reproaches levelled at his head by his so-called progressive neighbour, or not.

Says the Hindu to his progressive friend in reply :—Brother, what is progress? Though modern science is conquering every day newer and newer domains of nature, and is acquiring more and more powers, can you still say conscientiously that you have made yourself any the happier than in the previous ages? You have discovered the means of more and more rapid locomotion, you can send to the world news by the help of electricity in an incredibly short period, you can by your knowledge and its consequent power command more

comforts and more luxuries than your fore-fathers, but say sincerely, do you enjoy more and more peace of mind? The fact is, that increase of power increases also the thirst for more and more powers, and these powers can be used in either good or evil ways. For this reason, though your so-called civilisation advances day by day, we are witnessing more and more horrible wars and famines, newer diseases and the social problems getting more and more complicated every day. You charge me with pessimism. But what is your so-called optimism? Is it not wilfully shutting your eyes to the grim realities of life? You say that we are continually dwelling on the gloomy side of life, but do you know that we are only trying to see the world as it is, with its pains and pleasures, its life and death, its beauty and ugliness?

Yes, but if this be the reality of life, is no escape possible? Is it the fate of man to be happy one moment, and the next to be engulfed in a mass of misery? Is there any possibility of permanent happiness in the world?

Not in the world of relativity—not in the world as it is—answers the Hindu. But says he, "There is no cause for despair. This relative, phenomenal world--this chain of pairs of opposites--does not represent our whole existence--our real nature. For the next Sloka to be also uttered along with the former says :—

अहं देवो न चान्योऽस्मि ब्रह्मैश्वाहं न शोकभाक् ।

सच्चिदानन्दसुपोऽहं गित्यमुक्तस्त्वभाववान् ॥

—I am the Shining One, I am no other, I am Brahman, I cannot suffer grief, I am Existence, Knowledge, Bliss, my nature is ever free.'

Now, do you call this a gospel of despair? Do you dare to call this pessimism in a disparaging sense? A fact is a fact, by whatever name you may choose to call it!"

If one analyses all the different religions and philosophies and sects on this earth, he will find that every one of them agrees on the point that the state in which we find ourselves at present is something which is not desirable and that a better state is what is needed. Each one may express it differently, but the inner significance of all of them is the same. Does not an orthodox Christian believe that he is born in sin? Does not an advocate of modern science believe that compared to the vast possibilities of knowledge, his present state of knowledge is most insignificant? We would rather say, that the position of the scientific agnostic is pessimistic in its worst sense, for he, by his attitude towards life in general, entirely shuts out the possibility of a higher life for man? Does not also modern science, by positing natural selection and its necessary corollary, the survival of the fittest, as the only laws of life and evolution, tend to create a most pessimistic attitude of mind? Does it not also by denying or expressing grave doubts about the survival of the human personality after death, open a most dismal prospect for the future—namely annihilation? For, if annihilation be our only future destiny, what becomes of the meaning of our life--however joyous and pleasant it may seem at present? Is it not like asking a man condemned to death to taste the dainty dishes?

In reality, the Hindu is neither pessimistic, nor optimistic in the ordinary sense of these words. He wants to face the reality of life—and he says that it is both pain and pleasure—pleasure and pain—coming in continuous succession, like a wheel—

चक्रवर्तिवर्तन्ते भृःखानि च सुखानि च ।

—and he wants to get out of the wheel, and his Scriptures say, that really he is never in the wheel, he is in reality always out of it, if he only desires to know the Truth.

All the teachings contained in his books, all his religious practices, are intended for

the purification of the mind, so that not being tossed hither and thither by a wave of desires, he may look at the absolute truth with a calm and balanced mind, and at last finding the truth, go beyond both pain and pleasure and proclaim to the world with gladness the comforting gospel of the divinity of man—that he is no other than the eternal Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.

SWAMI SUDDHANANDA.

EPISTLES OF

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

CLXXVIII.

Glory to Ramakrishna!

Baidyanath,
21st December 1899.

Dear Sir,

I have been staying for the last few days at Baidyanath in Purna Baba's Lodge. It is not so cold, and my health, too, is indifferent. I am suffering from indigestion, probably due to excess of iron in the water. I found nothing agreeable--neither the place, nor the season, nor the company. I leave for Benares' to-morrow. At Deoghar A--stopped at --'s place, and the latter, as soon as he got news of us, earnestly insisted on our becoming his guests. Finally, he met us once again and prevailed on us to accede to his request. The man is a great worker, but has a number of women with him--old women most of them, of the ordinary Vaishnava type. * * His clerks too revere us much; some of them are very much ill-disposed towards him, and they spoke of his mis-deeds. Incidentally, I raised the topic of —. You have many wrong ideas or doubts about her, hence I write all this after particular investigation. Even the aged

clerks of this establishment highly respect and revere her. She came to stop with — while she was a mere child, and ever lived as his wife. * * Everyone admits in one voice that her character was spotless. She was all along a perfectly chaste woman and never behaved with — in any but the relation of wife to husband, and she was absolutely faithful. She came at too early an age, to have incurred any moral taint. After she had separated from —, she wrote to him to say that she had never treated him as any thing but her husband, but it was impossible for her to live with a man with a loose character. His old office-bearers, too, believe him to be satanic in character but they consider—a Devi (angel), and remark that it was following her departure that — lost all sense of shame.

My object in writing all this is, that formerly I was not a believer in the tale of the lady's early life. The idea that there might be such purity in midst of a relation which society does not recognise I used to consider as romance. But after thorough investigation I have come to know that it is all right. She is very pure, pure from her infancy. I have not the least doubt about it. For entertaining those doubts, I and you and everyone are guilty to her. I make repeated salutations to her, and ask her pardon for my guilt. She is not a liar.

I take this opportunity to record that such courage is impossible in a lying and unchaste woman. I have also been told that she had a life-long ardent faith in religion also.

Well, your disease is not leaving off yet! I don't think this is a place for patients unless one is ready to spend a good deal of money. Please think out some judicious course. Here every article will have to be procured from elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,

Vivekananda.

CLXXIX.

Ghazipur,
30th January, 1890.

Revered Sir,

I am now staying with Satis Babu at Ghazipur. Of the few places I have recently visited, this is the healthiest. The water of Pailyanath is very bad—it leads to indigestion. Allahabad is very congested. The few days I passed at Benares, I suffered from fever day and night—the place is so malarious; Ghazipur has a very salubrious climate—specially the quarter I am living in. I have visited Pavhari Baba's house—there are high walls all round, and it is fashioned like an English Bungalow. There is a garden inside, and big rooms and chimneys, etc. He allows nobody to enter. If he is so inclined, he comes up to the door and speaks from inside,—that is all. One day I went and waited and waited in the cold and had to return. I shall go to Benares on Sunday next. If the meeting with the Babaji takes place in the meantime, all right, otherwise I bid him good-bye. About Pramada Babu's place I shall write definitely from Benares. If Kali Bhattacharya is determined to come, let him do so after I leave for Benares on Sunday, but he should rather not. After a few days' stay at Benares, I shall start for Hrishikesh. Pramada Babu may accompany me. Please accept all of you my cordial greetings,—and blessings to R — and K — &c.

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

P. S. In my opinion, it will do you much good if you come and stay for some time at Ghazipur. Here Satis will be able to secure a Bungalow for you, and there is a gentleman, Gagan Chandra Ray by name, who is the Head of the Opium Office, and is exceedingly courteous, philanthropic and social—they will arrange for everything. The house rent is fifteen to twenty rupees, rice is dear, and milk sells at sixteen to twenty seers a rupee: all other things are very cheap. Be-

sides, under the care of these gentlemen, there is no chance of any difficulty. But it is slightly expensive—it will cost over forty or fifty rupees. Benares is horribly malarious. I have never lived in Pramada Babu's garden, he likes to have me always in his company. The garden is indeed very beautiful, richly furnished, spacious and open. This time when I go, I shall live there and report to you.

V.

CLXXX.

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna !

1891.

Dear and beloved,

* * Well, do you think there is any religion left in India! The paths of Knowledge, Devotion, and Yoga—all have gone, and now there remains only that of Don't touchism—"Don't touch me!" "Don't touch me!" The whole world is impure, and I alone am pure! Lucid Brahmananam! Bravo! Great God! Now-a-days Brahman is neither in the recesses of the heart, nor in the highest heaven, nor in all beings—now He is in the cooking-pot. Formerly the characteristic of a noble-minded man was "**विभूत्वनसुपकारभेदिभिः प्रशमानः**"—"to please the whole universe by one's numerous acts of service," but now it is—I am pure and the whole world is impure,—go and get money and set it at my feet. * * Tell the sapient sage who writes to me to finish my preaching work here and return home, * * that this country is more my home—what is there in Hindusthan? Who appreciates religion? Who appreciates learning?

To return home! Where is the home? I do not care for liberation, or for devotion, I would rather go to a hundred thousand hells, "**वसन्तवल्लोकहितं चरन्तः**"—"doing good to others' [silently] like the spring"—this is my religion, I do not want to have any connection

with lazy, hard-hearted, cruel and selfish men. He whose good fortune it is, may help in this great cause.

* * Please convey to all my love, I want the help of everyone: *Neither money pays, nor name, nor fame, nor learning; it is character that can cleave through adamantine walls of difficulties.* Bear this in mind. * *

Ever yours in love,

Vivekananda,

CLXXXI.

New York,
19 West, 33rd Street,
1895.

Beloved—.

* * I am now in New York City. This city is hot in summer, exactly like Calcutta. You perspire profusely, and there is not a breath of air. I made a tour in the north for a couple of months. Please answer this letter by return of post to England, for which I shall start before this will have reached you.

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

NEO-PLATONISM AND VEDANTA.

NEO-PLATONISM represents the intuitional reaction against Greek Intellectualism. Plotinus stands as the foremost figure in the Neo-Platonic school and by his *ecstatic* vision overcomes the Dualism which Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics try in vain to do away with by intellect or reason.

The Original Being, according to Plotinus, is the One as opposed to the many, the Infinite as opposed to the finite. It is Pure Existence, Thought and Goodness. But, in strict propriety, even these attributes cannot be attached to It, because predication implies limitation. The Original Being, Plotinus is therefore constrained to say, is a Pure Unity, excluding all determination. It is inaccessible alike to speech and thought. To know It as an object is to fall away from It. Even

the subject-object relation included in self-consciousness must be transcended in order to reach It. "It is a flight of the Alone to the Alone." Stilling the commotion of the world without and of the soul within, one is required, in the highest tension and concentration, in silence and utter forgetfulness of all things, to be lost in and be filled with God. This blessed but indescribable state in which discursive thought with its inherent limitations melt away and the individual and the Universal become one is called *ekstasis*. Plotinus, it should be noted, does not create any unbridgeable gulf between intellect and *ekstasis*. Intellect which passes through the stages of vulgar opinion and philosophic knowledge ultimately has its fulfilment in *ekstasis*.

Now the problem of creation is a knotty question that demands solution. Unlike the Hegelian Absolute Plotinus's Original Being is self-complete and self-manifest and has no necessity for the creation of a world to realise Itself. But, as a matter of undeniable fact, the world seems to exist. Plotinus looks upon creation as a progressive degeneration of God that cannot, in any way, touch and soil the Divine Life. The world, an overflow and excrescence, must go back to the Divine Essence in the end. The *nous*, the first projection of the Divine Life, at once thought and being idea and ideal world, is the archetype of the created world. Next, in order of perfection, comes the soul which is a product of the *nous* and occupies an intermediate position between the intelligible and the corporeal worlds. As a unit it has a soul of its own and is called the world-soul, and, as a totality, it embraces countless individual souls within itself. Last of all, comes the gross material world, inert and passive, without any sign of life and consciousness. But created things, images and reflexions of the Original Being, are subject to a law of diminishing excellence. The further the line of successive projection the less perfect and real they are.

Plotinus now considers the nature of man and his relation to God. Man is truly Divine, says he. This world is a dreary unknown land where, like a stranger, he drags a joyless, miserable existence. Inveigled and overpowered by self-chosen passions he seems to have lost his Divine Estate and comes to look upon himself as a finite

creature of flesh and blood with mean and ignoble interests. The majority of mankind are so much engrossed with material concerns that they live brutish, sensuous lives without any hankering for the spiritual ideal. There are some who, like the amphibia, waver between the spiritual and the material, sticking to none. There are also a few who live for God in constant contemplation, meditation and *ekstasis* and are the ideals of humanity. Plotinus proposes a graduated scale of virtues for the realisation of the goal of life. First of all, he speaks of civil virtues which serve only to embellish life, but do not uplift the soul. It is moral virtues that purify the soul and elevate it higher and higher. Above all, it is divine virtues—contemplation and meditation, coupled with ascetic observances which culminate in *ekstatic* raptures and bring back man to his real self. Plotinus himself is said to have attained to this *ekstasis* four times in life.

This is the sum and substance of Neo-Platonism as expounded by Plotinus. It is, in spirit, nothing but an indistinct and faint echo of Pure Monism of the Vedanta Philosophy, the highest watermark that metaphysics can reach. In his famous commentaries on the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* Shankara elaborates this position and establishes it, demolishing all arguments to the contrary by the sledge-hammer blows of his trenchant criticism.

The ultimate reality, according to Shankara, is *Brahman* that is, like Plotinus's Original Being, identical in essence with Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. It is absolutely homogeneous, one without a second. Beyond all change, It was never born and nor will It ever die. But, truly speaking, it is a contradiction to speak of *Brahman* in terms of language. As the mind, not to speak of the gross senses, staggers and fails to conceive It, Shankara, like Plotinus, proceeds by the negative process of 'this is not, this is not' (*नन्ति नन्ति*). Nothing phenomenal, finite and relative can be predicated of *Brahman*, for It is transcendental. Is It then, like the *Ding-an-sich* of Kant, unknown and unknowable? Where the knower and the known, along with the forms of time, space and causation, do not exist, the question of knowing and being known becomes irrelevant. It is being and becoming. It is more

than knowledge for *Brahman* is the Eternal Witness in everything. In It we live, move and have our being. Because of Its all-pervading presence the mind and the senses perform their respective functions. The cosmos, present before us with its wonderful panorama of names and forms, has no reality independent of *Brahman*.

If then nothing is truly real except *Brahman* what does this world mean and what is its relation to the Ultimate Reality? Plotinus calls it a falling away from the Divine Life. By a deeper and subtler analysis Shankara carries the conclusion arrived at by Plotinus to a height where ordinary vision and logic cannot reach. The creation, says Shankara, is a fictitious superimposition of *Maya*—the principle of nescience. Even as an expert magician produces illusory appearances, *Brahman*, associated with *Mara*, projects the phenomenon of this world. But what this *Mara* is is indescribable. So long as we are within its illusive grasp, we cannot say what it is; the moment we are free from it, the very question does not arise. It cannot be said to be real, for it vanishes before the light of *atma-jnana*; nor can it be said to be unreal, for it, at least, seems to spread the network of phenomena. It is simply a statement of fact. However, by a gradual process of evolution *Mara*, this inscrutable power of *Brahman*, seems to modify itself into a plurality of individual existences with ideas of differentiation. There spring, in due course, the cosmic intelligence, the principle of egoism, the mind with its different functionings, the senses, the subtle essences, the gross elements etc. which constitute the apparent dichotomy of the worlds of spirit and matter, self and not-self. Though transcendently unreal these individual existences have got empirical reality. In contrast with the Nihilistic Buddhists who reduce the world to an absolute void, Shankara grants it a relative existence.

The sublime note that even a crawling worm, not to speak of man—the crown and glory of the creation, is identical in essence with *Brahman* is the redeeming feature of Vedanta of the pure monistic school. Divinity is the birth-right and natural heritage of every creature. But as his vision is blurred over by *avidya*—ignorance, he seems to be self-hypnotised and 'ays the unhappy role of a knower, enjoyer and agent, subject

to pain and suffering. Even as a rope, seen in the dark, appears to be a terrible snake and frightens the observer; similarly the one, unchangeable *Brahman*, seen through the veil of *Maya*, seems to be broken up into many with countless limitations. Plotinus also speaks of the Divine Origin of man in similar terms. But Shankara is a decided advance upon him, for he goes further and shows clearly that what, in empirical consciousness, are additional to *Brahman*, the Pure undifferentiated consciousness, are figments of nescience.

Let us now consider how far this Pure Monism of Vedanta as interpreted by Shankara is rational and how far it can be actualised in practical life.

The stock arguments, ontological, cosmological, teleological, moral or their modified forms by means of which Intellectualism proves the existence of God have been exploded as they involve defects and fallacies. They cannot stand before criticism unless we postulate a belief in God. Hence the so called *terra firma* of reason on which the systems of such thinkers as Descrates, Martineau, Lotze, Royce and the like are grounded, becomes insecure and slides like quicksand. Hegel may be credited with having reached the climax of Intellectualism by a skilful gymnastic of the dialectic, but still his Absolute, realising Itself through self-evolved duality of a self and not-self is only a phenomenal God, coloured and conditioned by all the imperfections and limitations of human reason. Just as a man can never over-reach his own shadow, reason, by any number of somersaults, can never transcend its own limitations. The categories of reason, constitutionally fettered to the phenomenal, finite and relative, get involved in insoluble contradictions, antinomies and paralogisms when they are applied to God, the Noumenon. God, as He really is, is therefore unknown and unknowable. Kant and Herbert Spencer stop here and end in Agnosticism whence Shankara as also Plotinus begin. In this world of relativity, says Shankara, there is no absolute standard of validity. What is true in the dream becomes false in the waking state, and what again is valid in the waking state is falsified in the sound sleep. The life of an ordinary man, alternating between these three states, is circumscribed within the four walls of the senses and dis-

cursive reason. The truth that he can attain to is therefore perceptual and inferential which is simply a shadow of the Truth Absolute. But the Vedantist gives testimony to a superconscious state where ordinary consciousness with its onsnaring limits is swallowed up and gives place to an experience of the most exalted character, revealing *Brahman*. The Vedantist accords to it the highest validity. Such experiences that have been recorded in the sacred texts of the *Śruti* furnish the ground work of Vedanta. The *Śruti* is the ultimate standard of proof and validity that does not contradict perception and inference, but rather fulfils them by carrying up their conclusions to a deeper analysis and higher synthesis. Discursive reason, well regulated and disciplined, often prepares the way for the superconscious state. So in Vedanta as in the system of Plotinus there is no insurmountable barrier separating the former from the latter. Hence the charge that Neo-Platonism and Vedanta are subterfuges of irrational mysticism is totally baseless. Besides the undeniable fact, repeated many times over in History, that the pure, sinless and selfless lives of men, realising their identity with the Godhead, have acted as important factors in moulding the loftiest destinies of mankind, belies this charge.

Of all existent systems Vedanta claims to be extremely practical. Vain and empty theorisings have no place in it. The precepts inculcated by Vedanta must be lived and acted up to. After hearing them from the lips of an illuminated teacher, *Guru*, as he is called, the aspirant should reflect and meditate upon them with full faith and devotion (*श्रद्धां सन्ताय निरुपत्वात्*). This means a tremendous struggle between man's higher and lower nature, entailing unflagging determination and perseverance. Desire is the centre round which is revolving without cessation the wheel of *samsara* with birth and death, happiness and misery. But with the light of higher reason the aspirant should discriminate between the real and the unreal, renounce all desires for the fleeting things and advance steadily to his goal. Vedanta speaks very highly of renunciation and emphasises its greatest necessity in spiritual life, though now-a-days it has fallen into discount and its real significance is being diluted away by self-complacent interpretations. Renunciation must be

the anvil upon which should be forged the life of one who aspires to the spiritual ideal. The senses have a tendency to peer out, but the aspirant should draw them in and meditate on the real nature of his Self. At the highest stretch of concentration and illumination the body and the external world will lose their meaning for him and he will reach the super-conscious state where all strivings have their ultimate fulfilment. This blessed and covetable state is called *eksthar* by Plotinus and *samadhi* by the Vedantist. Any sincere and truth loving person may rise to it if he goes through the disciplinary practices enjoined. The story is told of a *Samraja* who was ever so conscious of his identity with *Brahman* that even in the jaws of a terrible tiger he continued repeating 'तत् तत्'—'I am That, I am That,' till he breathed his last. The neighbouring hills and dales reverberated with the divine melody of the mystic note 'तत्', sending a thrill of unspeakable bliss all round. Thus the apodeictic certainty of the Vedantic ideal have been demonstrated over and over again in the lives of saints and sages.

In this materialistic age unconsciously swayed by a deep predilection for life with all the promises of sensual enjoyment nations are at war with one another and individuals are divided against individuals. The result is that a feverish unrest stalks the world and humanity is gasping hard for peace in vain. Neither commerce, nor industry, nor territorial acquisition could satisfy man; but they are rather adding fuel to the fire. By the law of relativity happiness and misery, good and evil, virtue and vice are inextricably associated with each other, even as the one side of the shield implies the other. Hence the quest for unmixed happiness in this world is fruitless. There is no reason, however, for despair. Vedanta, the patron of all monistic systems, as styled by Prof. James, has solved the problem of good and evil. भूमेव सदा नात्मं सुखमत्वं—The Absolute alone is Bliss. Eternal, which is not, however, to be found in anything finite. By the mysterious power of *Maha* man who is, in his real nature, the Bliss Absolute, seems to be a plaything of the pairs of opposites. Arise, awake, break the hypnotic spell of self-imposed limitations and realise your inherent Divinity is the trumpet-call of Vedanta.

VIVEK ACHIUDAMANI.

(Concluded from page 17.)

[*Huck*: Another reading for कट्टूर् is कटाभूर् ; *Kata* is a kind of straw, and the other word means cloth.]

विलक्षणं यथा द्वान्तं लीयते भासुतेजसि ।
तथैव सकलं दृश्यं ब्रह्मणि प्रविलीयते ॥५६४॥

564. As darkness which is distinct (from sunshine) vanishes in the sun's radiance, so the whole objective universe is merged in Brahman.

धटे नष्टे यथा द्योम लोमैव भवति स्फुटम् ।
तथैवोपाधिविलये ब्रह्मैव ब्रह्मविन्द्यम् ॥५६५॥

565. As when a jar is broken, the space enclosed by it becomes palpably the infinite space, so when the supervening adjuncts are destroyed, the Knower of Brahman verily becomes Brahman Itself.

चरिं चारे यथा क्षिं तेलं तेलं जलं जलं ।
संयुक्तमंकतां याति तथाऽत्मन्यात्मविन्मुनिः ॥५६६॥

566. As milk poured into milk, oil into oil, and water into water, becomes united and one with it, so the sage who has realised the Atman becomes one in the Atman.

[Compare Katha Upanishad IV. 15. Also, Mundaka III. ii. 8.]

एवं विद्वैक्यवलयं सन्मात्रत्वमस्थितितप ।
ब्रह्मभावं प्रपद्येत् यतिर्नार्वितं पुनः ॥५६७॥

567. Realising thus the isolation that comes of disembodiment and becoming eternally identified with the Absolute Reality, Brahman, the sage no longer suffers transmigration.

सदात्मैकत्वविद्वानदरभाविद्यादिवर्मणः ।

असुष्य ब्रह्मभूतं शादृश्यणः कुत उद्भवः ॥५६८॥

568. For his bodies, consisting of Nescience etc., having been burnt by the

realisation of the identity of Jiva and Brahman, he becomes Brahman Itself, and how can the Brahman ever have rebirth?

[*Bodies.....Nescience etc.* - The three bodies are causal, subtle and gross. The first consists of Nescience; the second of seventeen things—five sensory organs, five motor organs, five Pranas (or, according to some, five fine elements or Tattvātmas), Manas and Buddhi; consisting of the gross elements, and the last, is what we see. These three bodies make up the five Koshas or sheaths from the Apandamaya down to the Annamaya. The Atman is beyond them all.]

मायाकलृतौ बन्धमात्रौ न सः स्वात्मनि बस्तुतः ।
यथा रड्जौ निष्क्रियायां सर्पभासविनिर्गमौ ॥५६९॥

569. Bondage and liberation, which are conjured up by Maya, do not really exist in the Atman, one's Reality, as the appearance and exit of the snake do not abide in the rope which suffers no change.

आवृतेः सदसत्त्वाभ्यां दक्षत्ये बन्धमात्राणां ।
नावृतिर्दृष्टुः कार्चिद्व्याभावाद्वृत्तावृतम् ।

यद्यस्त्वद्वृत्तावृतः स्पादूरुतं नो भवते थृतिः ॥५७०॥

570. Bondage and liberation may be talked of when there is the presence or absence of a covering veil. But there can be no covering veil for the Brahman, which is always uncovered for want of a second thing besides Itself. If there be, the Non-duality of Brahman will be contradicted, and the Sutris can never brook duality.

[*Sutris....duality*--e. g. "One only without a second," (Chhāndogya VI. ii. 1), "There is no duality in Brahman" (Katha IV. 11), and so on.]

बन्धं च मोक्षं सृपैव मृदा
बुद्धर्गयां वस्तुनि करपयन्ति ।
द्वगृह्णति भंधकतां यथा रवौ
यतोऽद्वयाऽसङ्गचिदंतदक्षरम् ॥५७१॥

571. Bondage and liberation are attributes of the Buddhi which ignorant people

falsely superimpose on the Reality, as the covering of the eyes by a cloud is transferred to the sun. For this Immutable Brahman is Knowledge Absolute, the One without a second, and unattached.

अस्तीति प्रत्ययो यज्ञ यज्ञ नास्तीति वस्तुनि ।
गुरुरेव गुणावेतौ न तु नित्यस्य वस्तुनः ॥५७२॥

572. The idea that bondage exists, and the idea that it does not exist, with reference to the Reality, are both attributes of the Buddhi merely, and never belong to the eternal Reality—Brahman.

अतस्तौ माययाकल्पतौ बन्धमोक्षौ न आत्मतः ।
निष्कल्पे निष्किये शान्ते निरवशं निरञ्जने ।

अद्वितीये परं तत्त्वे ड्योमवत्कल्पना कृतः ॥५७३॥

573. Hence this bondage and liberation are created by Maya, and are not in the Atman. How can there be any idea of limitation with regard to the Supreme Truth, which is without parts, without activity, calm, unimpeachable, taintless, One and without a second, as there can be none with regard to the infinite sky?

न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिर्ण थद्वा न च साधकः ।
न मुमुक्षुर्न वै मुक्त इत्येवा परमर्थता ॥५७४॥

574. There is neither death nor birth, neither bound nor striving for freedom, neither seeker after liberation nor liberated—this is the ultimate truth.

[This is a verbatim quotation from the Amritabindu Upanishad, Sloka 10. There is not much difference between 'Sadhaka' and 'Mumukshu.' So long as there is mind, there are all these distinctions, but the mind itself is a creation of Avidya. Hence the highest truth is that in which there is no relativity.]

सक्तविनिगमचूडास्वामतसिद्धान्तरूपं
परमिदमतिगुणं दर्शितं ते मयाद्य ।
अपगतकलिदोषं कामनामुक्तकुर्वि
स्वसुनष्टवस्तुत त्वं भावयित्वा मुमुक्षुम् ॥५७५॥

575. I have to-day repeatedly 'revealed to thee, as to one's own son, this excellent and profound secret, which is the inmost purport of all Vedanta—the crest of the Vedas—considering thee an aspirant after liberation, purged of the taints of this Iron Age, and of a mind free from desires.

[*Secret*.—The discrimination between the Real and unreal, which is hidden from the vulgar man.

The teacher's address is finished here.]

इति भूवा गुरोर्वीक्ष्यं प्रथंणा कृतानतिः ।
स तेव समनुज्ञातो यद्यौ निर्मुक्तव्यनः ॥५७६॥

576. Hearing these words of the Guru, the disciple out of reverence prostrated himself before him, and with his permission went his way, freed from bondage.

गुरुरेव सदानन्दसिन्धौ निर्मग्नमानसः ।
पावयन्वसुभां सर्वा विच्छार निरन्तरः ॥५७७॥

577. And the Guru, with his mind steeped in the ocean of Existence and Bliss Absolute, roamed, verily purifying the whole world,—all differentiating ideas banished from his mind.

इत्याचार्यम् यित्यस्य संवादेनात्मवक्तुणम् ।
निरूपितं मुमुक्षुणां सुखदोधोपपन्नये ॥५७८॥

578. Thus by way of a dialogue between the teacher and the disciple, has the nature of the Atman been ascertained for the easy comprehension of seekers after liberation.

हितमिदमुपदेशमाद्विद्यन्तां
विहितनिरस्तसमस्तचित्तदोषा ।

सद्यसुखविरताः प्रशान्तचित्ताः

भुतिरसिका यतयो मुमुक्षुवो ये ॥५७९॥

579. May those Sannyasins who are seekers after liberation, who have purged themselves of all taints of the mind by the observance of the prescribed methods, who are averse to worldly pleasures, who are of

pacified minds, and take a delight in the Sruti, appreciate this salutary teaching.

[*Sannyasin*—The word 'Yati' may simply mean 'one who is suffering for Realisation.' So also in Slokas 556 and 567.

Prescribed methods—Secondary or indirect (such as, sacrifices etc.) and primary or direct (such as, control of the senses and mind etc.).

संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-
स्थितानां जलकांक्षया मरुमुखि भ्रात्या-
परिभ्रास्यताम् ।

धृत्याससश्चुभास्त्वं इत्यकरं नहाद्यं दर्शय-
त्वेषा शङ्कूरभारती विजयते निर्वाण्यसंदायिनी ॥

580. For those who are afflicted, in the way of the world, by the burning pain due to the sunshine of threefold misery; who through delusion wander about in a desert in search of water;—for them here is the triumphant message of Sankara pointing out, within easy reach, the comforting ocean of nectar—the Brahman, the One without a second—to lead them on to liberation!

[*Threefold misery*—the *dkhyatmika* (those pertaining to the body and mind, such as pain, anguish etc.) the *adhidaiavika* (those coming from divine visitations or scourges of Nature, such as cyclone, earthquake etc.), and the *adhibhautika* (those due to other creatures on earth).

Wander.....water—are lured by the prospect of happiness from transitory things, which, as in the case of a mirage, exhaust them the more.

Easy reach—for this Mine of Bliss is their very nature. It is no external thing to be acquired. They have simply to realise that they are already That.

On to liberation—by inducing them to take away their self-imposed veil.

The solemn cadence of the Sārdulavikridita metre makes a fitting termination to the prophetic discourse.]

THE END.

STORIES OF SAINTS.

(*Retold by G.*)

VI.

HOLY DISOBEDIENCE.

BROTHER LEO is known to all who are acquainted with the life of Saint Francis of Assisi. He was Francis' beloved disciple and companion, a man of wonderful simplicity and purity,—the little sheep of God, as Francis affectionately called him. Gentle and eager to serve his master, Leo followed Francis as a loving shadow. Above all things he was submissive and constant in his faithfulness. And among all the brothers Francis chose him out to care for him and bring him daily a little bread and water when he lived in seclusion on Mount Aiverna where that great mystery took place, the stigmata of which afterwards Leo spoke, but in halting words. Leo nursed Francis through sickness, he cheered him and wrote down his words and songs; and when Francis left this world, fought his cause and wrote his life-story. And never does Leo tire to speak of his master's marvellous love and sanctity.

It happened once when Leo and Francis were living together among the woods on a quiet mountain side and they were without prayer-books out of which to say the office, that Francis, observing the peace of the place and withal the conceit of the human heart, felt the need of rebuke and scorn. So he be-thought himself of a holy game in which Leo was to play the part of the rebuker, and echo Francis' abuse of himself. So Francis began to lash his innocent soul with words of abuse and Leo answered him in a strange sweet manner, but contrary to holy obedience.

Said Francis: "Dear son, we have no

prayer-books to say office. And in order that we may spend our time in a way pleasing to God, I pray thee when I will speak thou shalt answer as I shall tell thee. And take good care, my son, not to speak other than I shall tell thee. I shall say: O Brother Francis, thou hast committed so many sins in the world that thou deservest hell; and thou, Brother Leo, shalt answer: Verily thou deservest the tortures of hell."

And brother Leo with dove-like simplicity said: "Begin, father, in the name of God."

Then said Francis: "So many sins hast thou committed, Francis, that thou deservest the torments of hell."

But Brother Leo answered: "God works through thee so much of good that surely thou meritest heaven."

Said Francis: "No, speak not thus, Brother Leo; but speak as I bid thee. When I shall have spoken, answer me thus: Verily thou art worthy of great punishment."

And Brother Leo replied: "As thou sayest, father, so shall I speak."

Then Francis sighing and weeping and beating his breast, cried out in a loud voice: "O my God of heaven and earth, I have offended Thee so repeatedly and so many are my sins, that I stand wholly accursed before Thee."

But Brother Leo answered: "O Brother Francis, God will reward thee in such a measure that thou shalt be accounted blessed above all."

And Brother Francis wondering that Brother Leo answered him contrary to his words, reproved him, saying: "Why dost thou not answer as I bid thee? I command thee by holy obedience that thou answer as I tell thee. I shall say: "O Brother Francis, vile wretch, thinkest thou that God will have mercy on thee? Thy sins are so many that wise art thou worthy of mercy. And thou,

Brother Leo, little lamb, wilt answer: "By no means art thou worthy of mercy."

But as Brother Francis had spoken, Brother Leo replied. "God the Father, whose mercy far surpasses thy sins, will show thee great mercy and will pour upon thee many graces."

And Brother Francis marvelled and in sweet anger reproved Brother Leo saying: "Brother Leo, why dost thou disobey my command and answer me contrary to my wish?"

Replied Brother Leo with great reverence and humility: "God knows, my father, that each time I wish to speak as thou biddest me; but God makes me speak as it pleases Him and not as it pleases me."

And Francis wondering said: "My son, most lovingly do I implore thee to answer me this time as I tell thee."

Replied Brother Leo: "In the name of God, speak, father, for of a certainty will I this time answer as thou wishest."

And Francis weeping much, called out: "O Brother Francis, vile wretch, thinkest thou that God will have mercy upon thee?"

Answered Brother Leo: "Not only so, but rather shalt thou receive grace and blessings of God and He will exalt thee forever, for whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted, and naught else can I say since God speaketh through my mouth."

And thus in humility the holy strife continued with sweetness and spiritual consolation until the approach of day.

TRUE RENUNCIATION.

THE STORY OF KING SIKHIDWAJ AND CHUDALA.

(Adopted from the *Yoga-Vasistha Maharamayana*.)

JN ancient times there was a king of the name of Sikhidwaj, adorned with the moral virtues of *sama, dama* in the city of Ujjain. His father died at an early age, and after his father's death when only of sixteen years of age, by the prowess of his arms he brought the surrounding kingdoms under his overlordship and assumed the title of the Emperor. He was married to the daughter of the king of Saurashtra, Chudala, possessed of many qualities. Chudala was not like an ordinary woman, but denying the trivial pleasures of the life of the senses she engaged herself in listening to and contemplating the spiritual scriptures. She began to question herself thus : "This individual who has since childhood been designated as Chudala—what is she in reality ? I am not this body driven by the vital forces and every moment going to destruction. This body is inert, and these instruments of actions are not different from the body, but only its limbs, and therefore of the same inert nature as the body of which these are parts. The organs of cognition and the vital force are parts of the body and so are equally inert. Like stones driven by the stick, the mind is also driven by the sensations of the body. The Buddhi or intelligence is also a reaction of the contact of the sense-organs with their objects, a compound, and therefore it is also inert and unconscious. The Ego is the reflex-action of the Buddhi and is also unconscious like a corpse. Alas ! everything in this world is unreal, a creation of ignorance. There is only one Reality of the nature of Supreme Intelligence. This Chit is the Brahman of the Vedanta. Let me stay in blissful abidance in the Brahman, the Essence of Delight, by giving up my identification with the limiting adjuncts."

Thus Chudala day by day became introspective and by meditation on the Self realised the Blissful Atman. Her selfish longings and attachments, all the dualities of happiness and misery vanished

altogether from her. Reaching the supreme goal of the Paramatman, her inner being was filled with overflowing Bliss and all her doubts vanished. She began to find her rest and abode in the supreme state of Blissfulness.

One day the Raja Sikhidwaj, observing much grace and beauty in the form of Chudala, said : "O blessed lady, seeing you I feel as if you have drunk the nectar of immortality and are filled with the currents of Bliss. Your mind has attained control of the internal and external sense-organs and they do not run counter to your wishes now. You have acquired much serenity of mind and are living in the profoundest depths of being ; you have shaken off all instability and disbalance of the mind. What divine nectar have you drunk of, what rare thing have you obtained, I desire to know." Then Chudala made answer :

"O Swami, I have given up my identification with the body natural to the ignorant and have attained identity of self with the Brahman. Therefore am I of such radiant form. Como happiness or misery, I am even minded with regard to them, therefore is such calm and composure written on my face. Whatever objects I see with my finite senses and mind, are only limited and finite, having no independent reality. Finding all these limited objects to be unsubstantial, I observe some Infinite Reality beyond the limitations of the mind and the senses. As my mind has become pure and transparent on the rise of right discrimination, I feel the existence of an unbroken Reality both inside and outside. This knowledge has imparted such a resplendence to my form."

The king Sikhidwaj could not catch the sense or drift of Chudala's words. He laughed and said : "O Chudala, what incoherent jargon have you talked ? But you are not to blame. You are yet a girl of tender age, of an immature mind. Go, and giving up these insane words void of reality set your mind to the enjoyment of the pleasures of life. Smiling a laugh of ridicule the king Sikhidwaj departed from the presence of Chudala.

These words of ridicule from Sikhidwaj not having appreciated the words of Chudala roused her endeavour the more and she engaged herself in spiritual practices.

After some time, the King went out of his capital to conquer an invading enemy and Chudala obtained much opportunity for her spiritual culture. Living in solitude, placing herself in a firm posture she began to practise Yoga, restraining her Prana. The Queen Chudala thus practising Yoga, and firmly established in the practices of the restraint of Prana, became possessed of the powers of Yoga. When her husband, King Sikkidwaj, returned, she taught him many a time about the knowledge of the Atman, but he paid no heed to it and ridiculed her as an immature girl. The king plunged into an orgy of luxury, enjoyment and power. But bereft of the knowledge of the Reality all his enjoyments brought only a reaction of pain and his mind began to be burn day and night by an insatiable fire of self-enjoyment and its attendant misery. That revel of sense-pleasures cloyed his senses and jaded his mind, and it brought him no prospect of an enduring happiness. His prosperous and wealthy kingdom palled and jarred on him and he began to think of some remedy for this disease of the world—its futile round of pleasures and the world-weariness it begets bringing no permanent happiness in the end. His mind began to be attracted to solitary caves and forests, and the thought arose: "Happiness or misery, adversity or prosperity cannot attack the mind of a forest-dweller and subjugate his mind. Purity and composure of the mind does not lie anywhere so much as in a solitary place." Thinking thus when the night fell and the whole city was hushed in the silence of the night and the inhabitants overpowered in sleep, leaving the sleeping Chudala in bed and saluting the Fortuna of his kingdom, he left the kingdom, to plunge into the depths of a forest. And when morning came with swift steps he passed many villages and cities, crossed many mountains and rivers and came to a thick forest situated near the Mandar mountains. This place was situated far from human habitation. He built himself a hut of leaves in the forest, in an even place abounding with fruits and flowers with a plentiful supply of water near by. The King Sikkidwaj also gathered a staff, a bowl a flower-basket, a *Kamandalu*, a rosary of beads, a blanket, a seat of *Kusa*-grass and deer-skin and other necessaries for the performance of *Tapas*. The first quarter of the day he used to spend

absorbed in morning devotions and meditations and telling the beads, the second in gathering from the forest flowers for worship, and fruits and roots and fuel, the third quarter in bathing and performing worship; afterwards living on fruits, roots and edible creepers gathered from the forest he spent the greater part of the night absorbed in *Japam*.

Now in the city when the King Sikkidwaj left and entered the forest, Chudala on waking did not find her husband in bed and searched for him for a while. Chudala was very intelligent and possessed of the vision of the Atman; she had already noticed the turning away of the spirit of the king from worldly pleasures and now concluded for a certainty that he had left the kingdom and entered the forest in the hope of attaining the Supreme Bliss and Peace. She collected the citizens, and addressing them said: "The king has for a certain reason left the kingdom and gone elsewhere; be you assured in your mind that in his absence I shall maintain the peace and order and safety of the kingdom." Thus eighteen years passed in Chudala's ruling the kingdom and Sikkidwaja's living in the forest. Chudala understood that by this time the king had attained steadiness in his goal and his desire for the highest truth had attained maturity. She knew from the beginning that by means of spiritual help and instructions from her, her husband would attain the Supreme Knowledge. She felt delighted in thinking that her husband would be established in the same supreme state with her on the rise of the true knowledge.

Chudala, disguised in the form of a Brahman anchorite appeared where the ascetic king Sikkidwaj was living in a hut in the forest. She found that her husband wearing a deer-skin, was living alone, looking composed and desireless; matted-hair has formed a crest on his head. Sikkidwaj on turning found that before him was standing a Brahman boy, the very embodiment of *Tapas*. His complexion was bright like molten gold, a rosary of beads was on his neck and the white holy thread was hanging from his shoulder. The mark on the forehead of the boy with an appearance of perfect self-mastery was showing beauty like the full-moon on the crest of the Sumeru mountain. The form of his body was like the abode of Bliss and Peace. Thinking some divine child had come,

Sikhidwaj rose from his seat and saluting him said, "O Divine child, whence have you come? This day is blessed to me by your sight. Accept these worships and my hospitality to-day. Chudala disguised as a Brahman boy felt much pleased at the hospitality of her husband, and addressing him said : " O Sadhu ! Have you attained the Supreme Peace and Calm for which you are trying by giving up all selfish thoughts and unreal imaginings ? Who are you and for what object have you come here ? I am an ascetic, tell me everything truly." The King Sikhidwaj answered, " O Serene One ! afflicted with fear by the way of the world and the bondages it brings to the soul, I have entered the forest. Afflicted with the thought of the eventual death of all, and hoping to find a way of immortality I have come here. I am King Sikhidwaj. In the world, man, a slave to desires, is carried helplessly round a succession of happiness and misery, birth and death and he suffers thereby. There is no abiding centre of happiness and equanimity in the world. Therefore I am performing this *Tapas*. But as ill luck would have it, as a poor man works hard but does not get proportionate return for his labours, so I even performing hard austerities, cannot get the Supreme Rest and Peace. As if all my efforts are coming to nought, I am getting no knowledge. I have now become more helpless by not getting the company of the Sadhus which I had while in my kingdom. Although I am performing the *Tapasya*, still I am passing from one unrest of the mind to another. Nectar has turned to poison in my case."

Chudala began to say : " I have heard that only *Jnana* (knowledge) is the highest thing and takes one to the highest goal. Desires only sway the mind of the ignorant, by which they obtain limited results from their finite desires. But the wise Knower is bereft of all finite desires ; and only by giving them up can one reach the imperishable state of Truth beyond birth and death. Freed from the fetters of desire, the *Jiva* (human soul) attains knowledge and reaches the highest truth. That knowledge is the Supreme Truth. This staff, that Kamandalu, that seat of deer-skin, which I find,—why are you showing such love for these ? They are also a cause of evil. Why are you not thinking on the Truth ? 'Who am I ? Where has this world sprung from, in what is it living, to what will it return ? Follow

the path of the Knower of truth and learn how bondage is produced and how it vanishes. Why are you spending your life in excessive endevours after external mortification ? Live in the company of the Sadhus who by knowing the Truth have attained same-sightedness. Serve them, question them and all your doubts will be sundored and by the rise of knowledge of the Reality in your heart, you will attain freedom. Therefore giving up these excessive external austerities which only give pain to the body but do not conduce to the rise of knowledge of the Truth live in the company of the Sadhus."

(To be continued).

REVIEWS AND REPORTS.

The Dawn Over Asia. By Paul Richard. Translated from the French by Aurobindo Ghose. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Price Re. 1/-.

These series of essays and addresses give noble expression to the formative spiritual ideas which are at present sowing and are in future destined to establish themselves in the eyes of individuals and nations. The equality, unity and freedom of all peoples will be compassed only by a renewal of the spirit ; "the sole possible foundation of fraternity and human harmony is the foundation of love, of the divine unity of beings, peoples, races of the world." The Vedantic truth of the Unity of the human soul and its application to the collective life of man finds noble garb in the words of cadenced prose of this book, full of much force and depth of thought. The book is well got-up.

Ancient Hindu Jurisprudence, by B. Guru Rajalu, Rao B. L., Ganesh & Co., Madras. Price Rs. 2.

This is an original contribution to the subject of the ancient law of procedure of India. The writer by an extensive reading and citations from the ancient Sanskrit law books has collected his materials and given a succinct and clear account of the ancient adjective law of India which forms interesting reading.

Devi Ahalya Bai Holkar, by Mukund Waman Rao Burway, Esqr., Judge, Small Cause Court, Indore. Price Rs. 2-8.

The book is an excellent and well-written biography of the devout Rani, whose name is a household word in India and evidences of whose charity and works of philanthropy, pilgrims and travellers met with in different parts of North India. The author has with great industry gone to the original sources for writing the life quoting chapter and verse in support and has succeeded in bringing out an authentic record of the life of his noble subject. By the author's pen we are presented with a noble picture of the life of the Rani, her exalted character, great piety, devotion to duty quite in keeping with her great name in India, which forms interesting and elevating reading. The book has in the frontispiece a good picture of the pious Rani.

(1) *Urdu Life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa*. Pp. 220. Price Re. 1-5. (2). *Urdu Life of Swami Vivekananda*. Pp. 320. Price Re. 1-10. (3) *A Review of Image Worship* (in Urdu). Pp. 70. Price 6 as. By Hari Charan Das Datta. To be had of Messrs. Kamalika Mill & Sons, Lohari Gate, Lahore.

Babu Hari Charan Das Datta, of Sialkot, Punjab, has at much sacrifice and pains brought out a Urdu translation of the Life of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and some of their writings for the benefit of the Urdu-knowing public. The author is well versed in Urdu and his translations can claim to be well-executed. We recommend them to the Urdu-reading public who desire to know about the great life and message of the Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India.

God and the Universe, by R. Krishnaswami Aiyer, B. A. B. L., High Court, Tinnevelly.

This little brochure of 21 pages is a philosophical consideration of metaphysical questions handled in an original way. It considers the problems in the light of Vedantic thought and displays much depth of thinking and originality of philosophical presentment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The Heart of the Bhagavad Gita, by Pandit Lingesh Mahabbagavat of Kurtkoti, P. H. D. (His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya of Karur Path).

Goods and Bads ; Outlines of a philosophy of life by Alban B. Widgery. Professors of Philosophy, Baroda.

The Call to Young India, by Lala Lajpat Rai, Price Rs. 3. S. Ganesan & Co., Madras.

Josiah C. Wedgwood—The Man and his Works. Price Rs. 2. S. Ganesan & Co., Madras, S. E.

A National Calendar for 1921. S. R. Murthy, Booksellers and Publishers, Triplicane, Madras. Price as. 12.

The Tenth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama Allahabad for the year 1920.

The report shows a record of useful service in alleviating suffering. The total fund of the Sevashrama during the year 1920 was Rs. 1640-11-1, and the expenditure was Rs. 1,563-3-9. During the year under review 13,603 poor were treated in the outdoor dispensary of which 6,620 were new. Of the latter 5,681 were Hindus, 598 Mahomedans, 43 Christians and 288 belonged to other denominations. The institution is a charitable one depending on the benevolence of the generous public to whom it appeals for help to carry on its work of relief.

Ramakrishna Students' Home, Madras. Report for the year 1920.

The rented building in the Kutcherry Road, Mylapore, continued to be the abode of the Home throughout the year. On the 1st January 1920 there were forty boarders. During the year, there were 17 new admissions while 12 left the Home; the actual strength was thus 45 at the end of the year. Eight students studied for the B. A. Honours course, nine for the Pass course; fifteen were in the Intermediate classes and nineteen in the High School classes; five were studying in the College of Engineering and one in the Medical College. The weekly religious discourses held at the Mutt and the daily classes were regularly conducted throughout the year. The total receipts during the year excluding the endowments amounted to

Rs. 9,184-2-4 as against Rs. 7,344-12-5 for last year. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 8,525-2-6. The average cost of maintaining a boarder comes to Rs. 13-12-0 per mensem. The balance at the end of the year, including endowments was Rs. 37,974-9-9. The new buildings are rapidly reaching completion. The total receipts towards the Building Fund up to now, amount to Rs. 1,62,868-7-10 and the expenditure so far incurred in the construction, to Rs. 1,56,891-0-5 leaving a balance of Rs. 5977-7-5. The Ramakrishna Students' Home has passed the sixteenth year of its useful life. Its sphere of usefulness promises to increase day by day, with the strength of the moral and material support it has gained from the generous public at large.

NEWS AND NOTES.

The public celebration of the 86th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa comes off on the 13th March, 1921 and the Tithipuja on the 11th March 1921. All centres and societies celebrating the occasion are requested to kindly send us reports of celebration for insertion in the Sri Ramakrishna number of the P. B. (April 1921).

By the enterprising endeavours of some young men, a Sevashrama has been established for the relief of the suffering and the distressed in the village of Lohaganj in Dacca district. We hope by the sympathy and help of the local public it may grow into an institution of social service.

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P. O., Shaharanpur Dt. for October and November 1920:—

Indoor patients: There were 13 old cases, 64 were admitted, 67 discharged cured, 2 died, 6 left treatment and 2 were still in the Sevashrama under treatment. Outdoor patients: There were 8424 cases of which 3170 were cured 5254 old repeated numbers.

Last month's balance	... Rs.	9959	4	3
Total Receipts	2180	0	9

Total ..	12139	5	3
Total Expenditures ..	2277	12	6

Balancce .. 9861 8 6

We beg to draw the kind attention of the charitable public that the Ardh-Kumbha Mela will be held at Hardwar in March 1921 when numerous Sadhus, Mahatmas and pilgrims will gather at Hardwar and Kankhal and remain for more than a month. Cholera and other cases break out on the occasion of such large gatherings and people resort to the Sevashrama for treatment as indoor patients. To meet this situation we approach the generous public for help in our service of love during the holy occasion of the Ardh-Kumbha Mela which is being held from time immemorial for the exchange of high thoughts amongst the Sadhus and for giving spiritual instruction to the pilgrims.—Swami Kalyananda, Hon'y. Secretary.

SWAMI Paramananda, after conducting the Services on three Sundays and the intervening classes at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, again set out on a three weeks' lecture tour. He spent the first eight days in Cincinnati, delivering six public lectures at the Woman's City Club and holding several classes at the temporary home of the Cincinnati Centre. In spite of the excitement incident to the presidential election, the attendance was excellent and increased steadily until at the closing lecture the hall was crowded. From Cincinnati the Swami went to Louisville on November 9th. Here he delivered four lectures at the Truth Centre to attentive and appreciative audiences. He also spoke twice for another New Thought Centre and conducted two classes at the meeting-place of the Vedanta study group established last winter. A special devotional Service was arranged on Sunday afternoon and so great was the response that it was almost impossible to find room for all who came. The Swami returned to Cincinnati on the 15th and remained until the evening of the 18th. He lectured three times at the New Thought Temple and held two classes for the members of the local Centre. This was the longest visit which the Swami had paid to Cincinnati and it so stimulated the enthusiasm that the members are eager to secure a permanent home for the work, feeling that it is now firmly established. In response to an invitation of nearly two years' standing, the Swami stopped over in Buffalo to lecture before the Larkin Men's Club.—The Message of the East.

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ment also the details of which we given separately.

3. INSURANCE BONUS. Those share-holders who held 1 or more shares in their individual names will be entitled to an Insurance Premium of Rs 50/- free of premium and without any deduction from the Life Insurance Department of the Company and as such the heirs of the share-holders will on their death be entitled to a bonus of Rs 50/- each out of Rs 50/- due to the heirs to be got from the Property Investment Department of the Company every year on three 1st January to be invested thereon as mentioned in the foregoing para 1.

4. LOANS. Those share-holders who hold ten shares and more than ten shares will be entitled to free Deposit Books of Rs. 25 and Rs. 5 each respectively from the Personal Investment Department of the Company only on payment of admission stamp and annual fees (as the case is) D. post Bond amount of Rs. 25 or Rs. 5 as the case may be, will be treated as an advance at 6 per cent interest per

annum against the share-holders and adjusted out of dividend amounts entitled to by them every year as per Article No. 8 of the Articles of Association of the Company and as such, they will be entitled to a loan of from Rs. 500 to Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 8,000 respectively free of interest and without any security as determined in the drawings that take place every year, as detailed on the reverse. The share-holders will also be entitled to loans on security of their immovable properties out of the funds of the Property Investment Department by which they can save the principal amount itself by paying mere interest as detailed separately.

5. CHARITY. As only a small portion of the Company's Building to be constructed as mentioned in para one above will do for the Head Office, the major portion of the same will be utilised for Theological College and Rs. 6,000 being interest to be accrued on the above two lakhs of rupees Government Securities will be utilised for (training up preachers of Hindu Religion, nursing the suffering, feeding the poor etc.) charitable purpose under the guidance of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Division as per Article No. 9. Provision is also made as per Article No. 91 for constructing mere buildings as well as for expenses for the above-said charities in other places also.

6. MANAGEMENT & SHARE-HOLDERS' PRIVILEGES. All the Directors including the Honorary Organizer and all the officials at the Head Office are working honorably and the accounts of the Company are audited by one of the auditors appointed by the Government of Mysore. Those share-holders who hold 50, 25, and 15 shares in their individual names will be eligible to be elected as Directors on the General, Provincial and Local Boards of the Company respectively when every vacancy occurs. The share-holders in each Presidency or Province can select Provincial Directors among them to supervise their respective Presidency or Provincial Branch or Chief Agency Offices and also to attend all the General (whether Ordinary or Extraordinary) Meetings of the Company on their behalf at the cost of the Company.

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Katha Upanishad, I, ill, 6.

Vol. XXVI, No. 296, MARCH 1921.

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Katha Upanisad, I, iii, 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

Vol. XXVI]

MARCH 1921

[No. 296

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Q.— It is generally said that work according to the Gita means the performance of Vedic sacrifices, and religious exercises; any other kind of work is futile.

Swamiji.— All right; but you must make it more comprehensive. Who is responsible for every action you do, every breath you take, and every thought you think? Isn't it you yourself?

The friend.— Yes and no. I cannot solve this clearly. The truth about it is that man is the instrument and the Lord is the agent. So, when I am directed by His will, I am not at all responsible for my actions.

Swamiji.— Well, that can be said only in the highest state of realisation. When the mind will be purified by work and you will see that it is He who is causing all to work, then only you will have a right to speak like that. Otherwise it is all bosh, a mere cant.

Q.— Why so?—If one is truly convinced by reasoning that the Lord alone is causing all actions to be done?

Swamiji.— It may hold good when one has been so convinced. But it only lasts for that moment, and not a whit afterwards. Well, consider this thoroughly, whether all that you do in your every-day life, you are not doing with an egoistic idea that you yourself are the agent. How long do you remember that it is the Lord who is making you work? But then, by repeatedly analysing like that, you will come to a state when the ego will vanish and in its place the Lord will come in. Then you will be able to say with justice,—Thou, Lord, art guiding all my actions from within. But, my friend, if the ego occupies all the space in your heart, where forsooth will there be room enough for the Lord to come in? Then the Lord is verily absent!

Q.— But it is He who is giving me the wicked impulse?

Swamiji.— No, by no means. It would be blaspheming the Lord to think in that way. He is not inciting you to evil action, it is all the creation of your desire for self-gratification. If one says the Lord is causing everything to be done, and wilfully persists in wrong-doing, it only brings ruin on him. That is the origin of self-deception. Don't you feel an elation after you have done a good deed? You then give yourself the credit of doing something good—you can't help it, it is very human. But how absurd to take the credit of doing the good act on oneself, and lay the blame for the evil act on the Lord! It is a most dangerous idea—the effect of ill-digested Gita and Vedanta. Never hold that view. Rather say that He is causing the good work to be done, while you are responsible for the evil action. That will bring on devotion and faith, and you will see His grace manifested at every step. The truth about it is that no one has created you—you have created yourself. This is discrimination, this is Vedanta. But one does not understand it before realisation. Therefore the aspirant should begin with the dualistic standpoint, that the Lord is causing the good actions, while he is doing the evil. This is the easiest way to the purification of the mind. Hence you find dualism so strong among the Vaishnavas. It is very difficult to entertain Advaitic ideas at the outset. But the dualistic standpoint gradually leads to the realisation of the Advaita.

Hypocrisy is always a dangerous thing. If there is no wilful self-deception, that is to say, if one sincerely believes that the most wicked impulse is also prompted by the Lord, rest assured that one will not have to do those mean acts for long. All the impurities of his mind are quickly des-

troyed. Our ancient scriptural writers understood this well. And I think that the Tantrika form of worship originated from the time that Buddhism began to decline, and through the oppression of the Buddhists people began to perform their Vedic sacrifices in secret. They had no more opportunity to conduct them for two months at a stretch, so they made clay images, worshipped them, and consigned them to the water,—finishing everything in one night, without leaving the least trace! Man longs for a concrete symbol, otherwise his heart is not satisfied. So in every home that one-night sacrifice began to take place. But then the tendencies of men had become sensual. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Some enter the house by the scavenger's entrance," so the spiritual teachers of that time saw that those who could not perform any religious rite owing to their evil propensities, also needed some way of coming round by degrees to the path of virtue. For them those queer Tantrika rites came to be invented.

Q.— They went on doing evil actions knowing them to be good, so how could this remove their evil tendencies?

Swamiji.— Why, they gave a different direction to their propensities,—they did them but with the object of realising the Lord.

Q.— Can this really be done?

Swamiji.— It comes to the same thing. The motive must be all right. And what should prevent them from succeeding?

Q.— But many are caught in the temptation for wine, meat etc. in trying to get along with such means.

Swamiji.— It was therefore that Sri Ramakrishna came. The days of practising the Tantra in that fashion are gone. He, too, practised the Tantra, but not in

that way. Where there is the injunction of drinking wine, he would simply touch his forehead with a drop of it. The Tantrika form of worship is a very slippery ground. Hence I say that this province has had enough of the Tantra. Now it must go beyond. The Vedas should be studied. A harmony of the four kinds of Yogas must be practised, and absolute chastity must be preserved.

Q.— What do you mean by the harmony of the four Yogas?

Swamiji.— Discrimination between the real and the unreal, dispassion and devotion, work and practices in concentration, and along with these there must be a reverential attitude towards women.

Q.— How can one look with reverence on the women?

Swamiji.— Well, they are the representations of the Divine Mother. And

real well-being of India will commence from the day that the worship of the Divine Mother will truly begin, and every man will sacrifice himself at the altar of the Mother.

* * * *

Q.— Swamiji, in your boyhood, when we asked you to marry, you would reply, 'I won't, but you will see what I shall become.' You have actually verified your words.

Swamiji.— Yes, dear brother, you saw how I was in want of food, and had to work hard besides. Oh, the tremendous labour! To-day the Americans out of love have given me this nice bed, and I have something to eat also. But, alas, I have not been destined to enjoy physically,— and lying on the mattress only aggravates my illness, I feel suffocated, as it were. I have to come down and lie on the floor for relief! * * *

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE fifty-ninth birthday celebration of Swami Vivekananda was observed in different parts of India, on the 30th January 1921. Let us to-day draw from his life and teachings one particular message,—the message of self-help and self-reliance. As in individual life and progress, it is a trait of primary importance, which strengthens all the other qualities of the personality, so in the communal soul, it is the first manifestation of healthy vigorous activity. It is this spirit of self-help which has become half obscured and which has to be recovered and possessed again. The Swami Vivekananda was wont to say sometimes about us: "The whole national characteristic is one of

helplessness and dependence."

To regain this spirit of self-reliance, we must first regain our self-consciousness and build a free centre of activity in the soul. For only when it is first built there, it will extend to the outer realms of society. This centre of activity has disintegrated, causing dissipation of all our energies. There is no cultural synthesis, no harmonious view of inner and outer life, the *idea* which our civilisation stands for and the peculiar turn given to the way of the realisation of the idea. This want of unity of cultural idea has created the immobility, uncreativeness and helplessness of our outer life. And

this inner centre has been overlaid with such a mass of undigested material, as to choke its expression and hamper its free movement.

It is idle for us to recover freedom of outer action, without first building the freedom of the soul within, without first recovering our cultural selves. And when this will be established a centre of activity will be created which will accept materials from every side and deal victoriously with them and transform them into moulds of self-expression. It will not be intolerant to outside influences, but will be avid of surrounding materials to put on them the stamp of its triumphant performance. Such an awakened cultural self will always seek for means of expression, as creation in self-mastery is the very condition of its being. Its thinking, guiding, and social construction, it will always seek to do itself and not wait for another to do it for it and then work itself into a frenzied enthusiasm over it. It will utilise its own resources, construct out of its own strength, create in its own mastery. It will earn by self-effort what it wants to attain...

When such a spirit of self-help possesses us, we will then no longer hide our own incapacity by blame cast on others, nor feel ourselves glorified by singing the praise of our past however glorious nor seek to bring back merely a dead past without creating in the present. In every thing, in our sufferings and sorrows we will look to ourselves, take the responsibility on us, and depend on our resources, on our own power of self-effectuation—in short on everything which is within our means and which we will eke out by adding to it the power of our mind and self. We

will then always find work for our hands to do, a hundred departments of activity to which we can dedicate our lives and by which serve our fellow-men. Then shall our progress be continuous, our struggle a self-enlargement, and our work will not be dependent on the frenzied excitement of the hour, nor our strength, the borrowed light of a rare and high personality. This spirit of self-help and self-faith is the only condition of an effective will in life and the cause of supreme practicality and creativeness.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Their Spiritual Relation.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

Continued from page 32.

S J. Narendra lived in the blessed company of Sri Ramakrishna for five long years. The reader may perhaps think from this that we mean that for these years Narendranath lived constantly in the company of Sri Ramakrishna. But it was not so. Like other residents of Calcutta he was also wont to visit him from his home. But this is true that receiving the unbounded love of Sri Ramakrishna, he made frequent visits to Dakshineswar during those years. It became a principal item of his life to visit Dakshineswar one or two days in the week and, when he got opportunity, to stay there continuously for four or five days. Sometimes also there occurred breaks in the rule. But Sri Ramakrishna's great love for him did not allow him to depart from the rule for long. For whenever for any reason he could not

visit Dakshineswar for over a week, Sri Ramakrishna would become very impatient to see him and sending repeated messages bring him to his presence, or himself go to Calcutta and spend sometime in Narendranath's company. So far as we know, that for the first two years of his acquaintance with Sri Ramakrishna Narendranath could not depart much from the rule of frequent visits to Dakshineswar. But after his B. A. Examination in 1881, when on the sudden demise of his father, the whole charge of his family fell on his shoulders he was compelled by many family pre-occupations to break the rule of his frequent visits and stay away.

However, studying the relation of Sri Ramakrishna with Narendranath during these five years, we notice the following five principal facts: first, that from their first meeting, Sri Ramakrishna felt that Narendranath was a person of high and rare spirituality and that he was born to help him in his Divine work of banishing the evil which has accumulated in religion during the long course of time and to fulfil the needs of Eternal religion for the present age. Secondly, Narendranath became bound for ever in the unbounded faith and love of Sri Ramakrishna for him. Thirdly, by examination of the Narendranath in many ways he confirmed his previous inner vision of the greatness and destiny of Narendranath's life. Fourthly, by teaching him in many diverse ways, he made Narendranath a fit instrument for the realisation of his great object in life. Fifthly, after the completion of the above teaching, he gave him instruction as how to advance in the work of the establishment of religion and ended by giving him the charge of his religious order.

Dividing the period of the relation of Sri Ramakrishna and Narendra in different parts, we can yet say, that the work of his love and faith in him, and his examination and teaching was initiated simultaneously. Evidences of the first viz. his faith and love for Narendra, we have given before. We will narrate more about it hereafter. For from now the life of Sri Ramakrishna was so intimately associated with Sj. Narendra as it was with no other of his devotees. It is narrated in the Bible that the Lord Jesus on meeting with one chief disciple of his, said, "On this rock will I build my church." By divine dispensation, such a thought arose in the mind of Sri Ramakrishna on meeting with Narendranath. Sri Ramakrishna felt that Narendra was his spiritual son, his friend and companion, born on earth to carry out his orders and that their lives were bound together for ever in the strong inseparable ties of love—the love that is of high spiritual character which manifests itself in giving infinite freedom to the object of love and yet makes him his own, and which finds its fulfilment in giving one's all to the loved object without asking for anything in return. Really such an unselfish manifestation of love, as between Sri Ramakrishna and Narendranath, was or is rarely witnessed in the world, and we have not the power to explain aright that wonderful love. Still in the interests of Truth we will attempt to give a glimpse of it.

As Narendranath was attracted by seeing the one-pointedness, renunciation and purity in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, so the latter was also charmed by observing the traits of unbounded faith, spiritedness and unbounded love of truth in the character of Narendranath. Leaving out of ac-

count the greatness of the future of Narendranath which Sri Ramakrishna saw with *yogic* vision, in trying to search for the cause of the wonderful attraction between these two great personalities, we can understand that it proceeded from the mutual respect which each had for the other. The ordinary people of the world, devoid of penetrative vision, misunderstood Narendranath's great faith in himself as arrogance, his great spiritedness of character as hauteur, and his austere love of truth as false semblance. His great indifference to the praise of men, plain speaking, bold and free dealings in everything, and above all his incapacity of doing anything in secret out of fear, furnished cause for people to arrive at the above mistaken estimate of his character. We remember distinctly, that before our acquaintance with Narendranath, a neighbour of his mentioning him told us thus about him: "There is a boy in this house and a more unceremonious lad than him we have not seen before. Because he has passed his B. A. Examination he thinks the world as straw—before his parents and uncles he would start singing to the accompaniment of *tabla* without the least hesitation—before the elders among his neighbours he would walk smoking a cigar—so in all matters." Shortly after this arriving at the holy feet of Sri Ramakrishna, one day—perhaps the second or third day of our visit to Dakshineswar—we heard the following praise of Narendranath from him:

Talking with a certain officer named Ratan of Jadunath Mallik's garden, Sri Ramakrishna pointing to us said, "These boys are good, have passed one or two university examinations, are well-mannered, of an amiable disposition—but I could not find a single one like Narendra. As

he is accomplished in singing and playing, so in study and conversation and equally so in religious matters. He meditates for the whole night, and the morning breaks and he is still absorbed in meditation, unconscious of the day. There is not a little of alloy in him, like a true coin which, when struck, gives out a true ring. I find with regard to other boys that they have with great difficulty and straining passed two or three examinations, and there it has ended—as if their whole power and capacity has run out by that effort. But Narendranath is not like them. With sovereign ease he does all things, as if passing examinations is nothing to him. He goes to the Brahma Samaj, sings devotional songs and he is a real Brahma-jnani. Sitting down to meditate he sees the Inner Light (Jyoti). It is not for nothing that I love him so much." Charmed to hear all this and desiring to be acquainted with him, we asked him, "Sir, where does Narendra live?" In reply he said, "Narendranath is the son of Viswanath Dutt, who lives in the Simla quarter of Calcutta. Returning to Calcutta on enquiry we found that the young man about whom we had previously heard so much dispraise from his neighbour as related love, was the much-praised Narendranath of Sri Ramakrishna. Astonished, we began to think that day that relying only on some external acts, how often we come to a wrong conclusion about others!

In connection with the previous matter it will be well if we narrate an incident here. A few months previous to our hearing the praise of Narendranath from Sri Ramakrishna, we were fortunate to see Narendranath one day in the house of a common friend. We saw him only that day and from a mistaken impression

gained of him we did not advance to make his acquaintance. But his words of that day are so deeply engraven on the memory that even after the lapse of so many years it appears as fresh as if heard only yesterday. Before recording his remarks of that day it is necessary to give the reader an idea of the circumstances in which we heard them; otherwise the reason why we came to a mistaken idea of Narendranath would not be apparent.

The friend in whose house we met Narendranath that day, was then living in the Simla quarter of Calcutta in a two-storied house in Gour Mohon Mukherjee's Lane, opposite the house of Narendranath. At the time of our study at school, we were class-fellows for four or five years. Two years before the Entrance Examination, he went as far as Bombay with a view to visit the Western countries but for many reasons could not go. He later became the Editor of a paper and wrote books and composed poems in Bengali. He had married a few years previously, and we heard from the mouths of many people that since then his character and tendency had become perverted and that he did not hesitate to earn money by dishonest means. In order to ascertain the truth of the fact we dropped that day in our friend's house suddenly.

Sending information to him about our arrival through the servant, we were waiting in the parlour room for him, when suddenly a young man entered the room and as one long familiar to the owner of the house, freely stretched himself half-reclining on a pillow, humming to himself a snatch of a Hindi song. So far as we remember, the song was about Sri Krishna, for the two words '*Kanai*' (Sri Krishna) and '*Basari*' (flute) entered our ears. Although not looking smart, still he was

very neatly dressed, and his well-dressed hair, vacant look, the song about "the flute of Sri Krishna" on his lips, combined with his intimacy with our alleged misguided friend—all these did not place him in a favourable light to our mind. Without taking the least notice of our presence in the room, we found him behaving very freely and laterly from his starting to smoke we concluded that he was a trusted companion of our perverted friend, and that by association with such men like him he has become degraded. However, when even after noticing our presence in the room, he took such an indifferent attitude and remained absorbed in himself that we did not advance to make his acquaintance.

After some time, the friend of our childhood came out and even after meeting us after a long time he spoke only a few words to us, and gladly engaged himself in conversation with the young man on various subjects. Such indifference on his part also did not strike us well. Still thinking it unmannerly to take leave and depart at once, we began to listen to the conversation into which our *littérateur* friend entered with the young man on the subject of the English and Bengali literature. Starting from the common ground that higher literature should be the artistic expression of thoughts, they differed on the question whether artistic expression of all human thoughts deserves to rank as literature. So far as we remember our friend took the side viz. that the artistic expression of all thoughts, good, bad or indifferent should take rank as literature, and the young man combating that statement was attempting to establish, that even giving an artistic expression to thoughts if a literary production does not subserve the establishment of a high moral ideal

of life it cannot be regarded as a high literary production. To support his case the young man began to mention the names of the famous authors of English literature from 'Chaucer' downwards and to show one by one that only by giving expression to high ideals of life, have they attained immortal fame. In conclusion the youth said: "Although feeling the impress of all ideas, good or bad, man is seeking in the midst of them to manifest the high ideals behind life, and the difference between men constitutes in the matter of their manifesting the inner ideals of life. It is found that ordinary people accepts the outward appearances of sense-enjoyments as true and eternal, makes the attainment of them the goal of life and are resting content there. They idealise what is apparently real. There is little difference between animal life and such ideals. Such an attitude towards life cannot give birth to literature of a high order. There is another class of people who, unable to rest content with the outward appearances of life and its apparently real pleasures, seek to realise, in the inner consciousness, higher and higher ideals and endeavour to mould the outer life in the image of them. They want to realise the ideal, and such men only create literature of a high order. Among the latter also, those who adopt the highest ideal and seek to realise them in life, have to stand aside from the limitations of ordinary worldly life. I have only found the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar able to translate such an ideal in full in his life, and therefore I regard him." Although charmed by the deep words and learning of the youth we were pained at noticing his intimate relation with our friend and the disparity between his words and outward behaviour. After-

wards taking leave we departed from the place. A few months after this, we were charmed at hearing the praise of Narendra-nath from Sri Ramakrishna, and came to his house in order to be acquainted with him. We felt struck with wonder to find our previously seen youth to be Narendra-nath, so much praised by Sri Ramakrishna.

SWAMI VIVEKANADA, THE GREAT LIBERATOR.

Every move the world has made, or is in the way of making is a step towards breaking loose the shackles that bind the spirit close to matter, though the tendency of the former is to rise high up in the ethereal sky of freedom and that of the latter is to sink down into the bondages below. Every successful effort in the right direction in this conflict of forces leads the party from darkness to light, weakness to strength and death to life. This process of purification and liberation of the spirit, individual or collective has been going on from the first day of the creation, with usual breaks and reactions, from time to time. When the number of forces that go to form life are either crushed or misdirected a mighty force is seen to restore or redirect the forces, and guide the destiny of the individual or the nation towards the point it strives to attain unconsciously or consciously. The human form which is made the centre of the mighty liberating force is the person whom we call a great man, a hero, a prophet. His life is uncommon, his character is unparalleled, his deeds are so unique that they defeat all human attempts to comprehend them. The great soul rises high above humanity and people follow him without much questioning.

The great liberating force of the East and the West which found its expression in and

through the gigantic personality of Swami Vivekananda who is above and beyond any particular race or nation,—for every great soul is such—came down to the world more than half a century back. Since his coming in our midst the world has seen a series of volcanic eruptions, and has been passing through a severe process of purification and liberation in every department of life, social, political, religious and so on. Not only the awakening that has been stirring India is due to the scattering of the soul-stirring luminous ideas of the Swami but also the great over-growth and collapse of the extensive material civilisation which was preparing for the last century to make way for a more spiritual regeneration of life, had as one of its landmarks and factors of the future in the spiritual field, been brought to the West by Swami Vivekananda in the Religious Parliament at Chicago. The Western world was smothering under the pain and pressure of materialism, and was hankering after catching a glint of the spiritual light which would perchance go from the East and strengthen the spiritual elements of the culture. On the other hand, the people of the East, especially of India, having lost their glorious tradition of the past, steeped in utter ignorance and superstition, engrossed with mean worldly machinations and inundated by the materialistic overflow of the West, needed a guide and a saviour who could free and lead them from the heterogeneous and unhealthy influences of home and outside and purge the body and mind of the accumulated dust of the ages in order that the old ever-dwelling spirit might reflect again. The great personality that came forward with a fund of energy and strength to revivify the decadent races of India, and with a stock of spiritual ideas to illumine the people of the West, was the Swami Vivekananda.

The Swamiji has given only the spirit and the principle, which requires to be worked out into particular details by the

coming generations. The spirit and force is to be felt in silence.⁴ It cannot be expressed. Let us consider a great principle which more than anything else applies to the Indian life.⁵ Swamiji says, "The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself....The banner of the spiritual canot be raised too high in this country. In it alone is salvation." This is the fundamental principle of the Ramakrishna Mission organised by the Swami Vivekananda and the members of the Mission have boldly tried to respond to the call of the master. The sincere worker must throw away his own burdens that he may more conveniently and fully take up the burdens of thousand others. In this way Service, in its turn, intensifies Renunciation. These, Thesis and Anti-thesis, I mean Service and Renunciation, are synthesised in a higher phase of fulfilment that is a dawn of spiritual vision, which is the crown and glory of Indian life. The spirit of burning renunciation coupled with the sentiment of love and benevolence are sure to establish a dominion of spiritual democracy where the doctrine of the Vedanta will be realised in the practical life of every citizen, where fight will be replaced by help, and competition substituted by co-operation.

It should be noted in this connexion that abstinence with the higher self involves separation from the lower self. One presupposes the other. But it should not be misunderstood here that we should accept nothing of the wisdom and learning of the other nations. Swamiji says "If we want to rise we must also remember that we have many things to learn from the West. We should learn from the West her arts and her sciences.....The West has to come to us to learn to assimilate religion and spiritual knowledge. We Hindus must believe that we are the teachers of the world. We have been clamouring here for getting political rights and many other such things. Very well: rights and privileges and

other things can only come through friendship, and friendship can only be expected between two equals. When one of the parties is a beggar, what friendship can there be? It is all very well to speak so, but I say that without mutual co-operation we can never make ourselves strong men." "Let us be as progressive as any other nation that ever existed, and at the same time as faithful and conservative towards our traditions as Hindus alone know how to be." "Whether you believe in spirituality or not, you have to get a hold on spirituality and keep to it. Then stretch the other hand out, and gain all you can from other races but everything must be subordinated to that one ideal of life; and out of that a wonderful, future India will come—I am sure it is coming—a greater India than that ever was."

Now, the theory of spiritual democracy which I think will be the last word of Political Philosophy emanates from the connection of the East and the West. This recognises the equality and liberty of each unit, spiritual or otherwise. Indian civilisation rests on the freedom of spiritual units while the Western societies and states are aiming at the realisation of perfect democracy in the sphere of politics merely. The one is trying to liberate the soul while the other is trying to free the body and mind. Political freedom that presupposes the freedom of thought, speech and action is the watchword of the West, while spiritual freedom that presupposes the purity of thought, speech and action is the watch-ward of the East. So long the East was East and the West was West and the twain never met. Now the sense of poverty and the law of necessity have compelled them to meet each other and shake hands. So Swami Vivekananda says: "India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature... We have developed one phase of humanity and they another. It is the union of the two that is

wanted." By delaying this union one party defeats its own purpose. Mr. Wellock says: "In a little while there is some probability that England would come to her senses, and realise that even yet her greatest need is a moral revolution, that her only salvation as a nation and a people lies in a grander and more spiritual conception of life and of society, and that if ever she is to give birth to democracy it will have to be by virtue of fuller liberty controlled by a more adequate, a more intensely social morality." So it becomes obvious why neither of the party can enjoy its democracy long. The relation between Politics and Religion is organic. Life as a whole comprehends both. One divested of the other is crippled, if not dead. Swami Vivekananda grasped the problem of life as a whole, and wanted to cure the body and free the mind of India that it may be the temple of God over again; and insisted on the Western world purifying the mind and body that the spirit may break through the prison-house of matter and regain the royal seat so long usurped by a subordinate. Paradise is lost, it must be regained not only in the West but also in the East by the establishment of a Spiritual Democracy from pole to pole. So we see that the whole life of the Swami was devoted to the great task of liberating the nations of the East and the West from their respective evils that served as stumbling blocks and rendered them one-sided. So he emphasised the principle of 'give and take' that the gaps of both may be filled up. So the great Swami preached the gospel of *Sakta* in India, and that of *Shiva* in the West that the state of Democracy both spiritual and political may be established everywhere, and that the hankerings of the nations may find satisfaction in an Utopia, not only of Sir Thomas More, but also of Vedanta and Vivekananda.

So far about the cosmopolitan character of Swami Vivekananda; now a word about the Social Service propaganda which he orga-

nised for the salvation of his dear countrymen. When the Indians forgot to recognise the divine heritage of man, when class was set against class, and creed against creed, when high walls of partition were created between the high and the low as recognised by the stereo-typed caste-system, Swami Vivekananda organised a band of young men to drive home the message of equality and fraternity to the down-trodden depressed classes of the country. His heart bled to think 'what man has made of man,' so he employed vigorous remedies to cure their weakened body, dark mind and unclean ego. He called upon the young men of his country to atone for the hateful abuses showered down upon the helpless creatures by their forefathers who made them slaves by enslaving 'the untouchables.' So he says : " I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for. They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return they get kicks. They are practically our slaves." " We hated and hated them till they have lost faith in themselves. They think they are born slaves. Give them their rights, and let them stand on their rights." Elsewhere he says, " The only hope of India is from the masses. The upper classes are physically and morally dead." It is gratifying to see that the high walls of hatred and aristocracy are being razed to the ground by the death-blows coming from the men gifted with depth of reason and breadth of heart. Swamiji wanted to prepare his country before giving it any reform. So the grand task before him was not to create any stirring of life which would demolish the new structure to its very foundation, but to prepare the ground for the reception of a greater movement in time to come. He came to build and not to destroy, so the method of the balanced mind was one

of watchful adaptation and gradual development. He cultivated the garden that the budding nationality might, in a natural course, unfold the petals one after another, to the sunshine of freedom, external and internal, which is dawning upon our dear mother-land.

UPENDRA CHANDRA DUTT, M. A.

THE ART OF HEALING IN ANCIENT INDIA.

THE art of healing occupied the attention of the Hindus from remote antiquity. In the Rik Veda when success was sought in battle, the Rishis invoked Indra, the god of prowess and triumph. When relief from some disease was obtained, they praised the twin gods, the Asvinis. When they offered sacrifice in honour of the God or Gods whom they called in their aid in time of necessity, the Asvinis were excluded from a share in the sacrifice. This proves the fact that the medical profession held an inferior position to religious and social points of view. The surgeons or physicians whose aid was indispensable in a people whose varied avocations of life and stirring military exploits, whose high state of civilisation with all its necessary concomitants, of advantages and baneful influences, and whose luxury and abundance of food, disturbed the natural balance in the body and produced physical distemper, could not be neglected for a long time, and they slowly won recognition in the share of a sacrificial offering by dint of their devotion to scientific investigation, knowledge and purity of character. "At one time," says Dhanvantari, "surgeons were looked upon as unclean and unfit to mix in respectable society: but the success gained by the Asvinis in the case of Yajna at once raised them in the estimation of all." (Quoted by Kunte in his introduction to

Bugvat : Vide Taittariya Sanhita VI. 4. 9. 1 ; Shatapatha Brahmana and Aitareya Brahmana (1. 18). Co-wives jealous of one another tried to monopolise the love and attention of their common husband by calling in the aid of the physician who recommended beauty balm and complexion paste in the shape of vegetable preparations. "Thus materia medica," says Mr. Kunte, "had made sufficient progress at least 4000 B.C." Soot'ing; anomalies had to be prescribed for wet worn feebleries, broken legs had to be replaced by artificial iron legs; wounded eyes had to be plucked off; diseases had to be cured, and women had to be assisted at child-birth. This proves beyond doubt that the medical profession had occupied a large share of attention of the people and that physicians and surgeons had won a place of distinction in society.

The Atharva Veda is a repository of the medical knowledge of the Vedic Aryans and it shows a high state of development even before systematised medical treatises were written in after times. It is a very important and interesting work for gauging the intellectual and scientific attainments of the ancient Hindus. Western scholars like Prof. Bloomfield has called it by various names, such as "holy charms," "witchcraft charms" and Prof. MacDonnel says that "it is a heterogeneous collection of spells. Its most salient teaching is sorcery, for it is mainly directed against hostile agencies" etc. Again, it "is a collection of the most popular spells current among the masses who always preserve more primitive notions with regard to demoniac powers. The spirit which breathes in it is that of a pre-historic age" Adalbert Kuhn says that "some of its spells for curing bodily ailments agree in purpose and content as well as to some extent even in form, with certain old German, Lettic and Russian charms," and so Prof. MacDonnel gives his sage conclusion that "a few of its actual charms probably date with little modification from the Indo-European period" Quota-

tions may be given from the Atharva Veda to prove that the ancient Indians were in the possession of the knowledge of the use of surgical instruments with which the birth of the child was facilitated. Many kinds of fever, heart-disease, head disease, diseases of the kidney, leprosy, rheumatism, consumption, etc. and their remedies have been noted, proving that the Atharva Veda is really not what the apostles of western culture represent it to be.

There can be no doubt that the Atharva Veda is the first work on medicine. Rumen diri Sundar Iyengar, the great Indian savant, contributed an article (Santy 1 P. II bat Patrika, 1312, p 20), to show that in himayani surgery were practised in the Vedic literature. Anatomy and surgery have developed from the same Veda. In Charak we find systematic treatment of diseases, their diagnosis and prescription, while in Sushrut we see that surgery is in a high state of improvement. Dr. Gajanan Mukund, in his thesis presented to the Calcutta University on 'The surgical Literature of the Hindus,' has shown in a summary way that various instruments for surgery were used by Sushrut, Charak, and others in incantations in the Atharva Veda, but they are intermixed with names of planets and nymphs, selected with judicious discrimination for medicinal purpose. It must be admitted that scientific works like those of Charak and Sushrut could not have been written in the Vedic age. A long space of time had certainly elapsed between the Atharva Veda and Charak and Sushrut. Panini refers to Charak several times. These eminent physicians were preceded by many others of less note. As Panini was a man of the 7th or 8th century before Christ (Prof. Goldstucker), it can be reasonably held that Charak flourished before him.

Dr. Ray has very ably shown that both Charak and Sushrut flourished long before the Buddhist age, (Vide Dr. Ray's History of

Hindu Chemistry Vol. I. Intro.) Several centuries intervened between the Atharva Veda and the Charak. There were standard works on medicine at the time of Charak; and he received much help from them. The Charak is discursive and displays a metaphysical tendency. Its tedious prolixity stands under a different predicament to the Sushrut with its dignified and laconic brevity and more scientific treatment of the subject matter. Another point of contrast is that the Charak is a treatise on medicine, while the Sushrut is a work on surgery. Better physiological knowledge and greater skill in the manipulation of surgical instruments point to the later composition of the Sushrut. We are astonished to see what the Hindus did both in the art of healing and in wielding the lancet in so early an age—an age when "elegant Greece and haughty Rome" were in the embryo and the forefathers of the nations of modern times were roaming in the jungles as naked boor. So we see how futile is the attempt of Haas and other western scholars who always try to trace everything of the Hindus to the fawning fountain-head of Hellenic culture. Dr. Ray deserves our gratitude for exploding the theories of these viscares and for laying bare the mass of facts which had been so long utilised by the opponents of Hindu culture to suit their own purpose, and to prove the priority of "Greek culture" and the supposed indebtedness of the Hindus to it.

We do not come across any great name between the age of the Charak and the Sushrut, and that of Vagbhat who, as Prof. Kunte says, flourished in the second century before Christ. But we must not suppose that the lamp of medical knowledge was extinguished during the interregnum. Humanitarian works were undertaken by the Buddhist monks. Care was taken for the sick. Relief was given to suffering humanity. Sanctity of life was held in high esteem. Hospitals were founded and "arrangements for the

healing of man and beast were provided not only throughout all provinces of the empire, but also in the independent kingdoms of Southern India and Hellenistic Asia; medicinal herbs and drugs, whatever lacking, being planted, imported and supplied as needed." (Vincent Smith) Thus the medical profession received an immense impetus and it was regarded as an indispensable necessity for the well-being of society.

Vagbhat's Astangahrdaya is an epitome of the Charak and the Sushrut, and though he showed no high degree of originality, except slight modifications in Surgery, yet he is held in the Deccan with high esteem and is regarded as a revealed author. Nagarjuna who figures so prominently in the Mahayanik school of Buddhist philosophy, flourished, according to Lassen and Kern, in the 1st century A. D. and cannot be identified with Nagarjuna, the alchemist. But Dr. Roy has assigned the middle of the 2nd century A. D. to Nagarjuna. Rasaratnakar, a typical production of the Mahayanist period, was most probably written about the 7th or the 6th century A. D. Chakrapani Datta, who wrote his celebrated treatise about 1050 A. D., bases his work on Vrindu, who, in his turn, follows clearly the Nidana of Madiabkar whose date Dr. Roy assigns to the 8th century A. D. (Intro. Vol. I. ix.). One peculiar feature of Chakrapani and Vrindu is that they have directed their attention to metallic preparations in contrast with the use chiefly of herbs and simples by their predecessors. The search after the *elixir vitae* in the Iatro-chemical period was continued and various "preparations of mercury, iron, copper and other metals, although they could not secure immortality or revive the dead, were found to be helpful accessories in medicine." (Hist. of Hindu Chemistry Vol. I Chap. V). The new metallic preparations had begun to supplant the medicines "drawn chiefly from the vegetable kingdom." Thus in the 11th and the 12th century A. D. the medical knowl-

edge of Hindus was far in advance of that in Europe in the same period. Dr. Roy has done more than any one else to shed the light of research and scholarship on a dark episode in the history of the intellectual development of the Hindus, to explode many half-truths and haphazard remarks of western Orientalists and to open the temple of ancient culture with the golden key of learning.

HARIPADA GHOSAL, M. A.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

TROM time immemorial, the voice of India is the voice of religion. From time immemorial, India is the land of sages and temples. From time immemorial, India is proud of her spiritual wealth. Crush it to death, it will rise from its ashes once more with renewed vigour like the sphinx of old. It has stood the test of time. It has withstood the shocks of centuries and the onslaughts of many religions, and like a torch, the more it is shaken, the brighter it shines. For truth alone can endure in this world and nothing but truth will pass current in God's world. No other religion stretches back far into the dawn of the past. Many are the religions that have come and gone. Many are the religions that have come for refuge and have found a ready asylum in India. The Crescent came as a wave of conquest. India has lost nothing. The Cross rules the land and guides our destinies. India has lost nothing. But let India's religion go, and in that passing will be India's grave. For religion is the soil into which India's roots are stuck and torn out of it, she will inevitably wither and decay. India's history, her literature, arts and monuments, all have religion written across them. But let India's religion go. India would then remain an object of memory, a subject for the

antiquarian and a corpse for dissection—but no longer an object of admiration and we no longer a nation.

For several centuries, religion was at a low ebb; several causes were at work and brought about its decline. The country was steeped in mental and moral darkness, and men sank into ignorance and atheism. Many religions sprang into existence, each carrying seeds of its own decay. The time came for a message from a divine voice. God said : "Let there be light." Sri Krishna redeemed his promise and glorious names adorned the pages of religious history. They carried the banner of religion to awaken our slumbering souls, to hold before our admiring gaze noble ideals of life and action and to scatter broadcast the waters of immortality through the length and breadth of India. Their mortal remains may moulder beneath the earth. The torch of the antiquarian may shed but a feeble light on their labour of love. But the monument of wisdom they handed down to us, the code of morality they have erected for us are engraved deeply on the tablets of our hearts and till our hearts perish in the grave of time they will be fresh and ineffaceable. A period of decay and degradation is necessary for the growth of all nations. India only stooped to conquer. She only sank to attain to loftier heights. The ripe fruit is first put into the ground, it then decays and rots, and out of the decay springs the root of the future tree—mightier than the first. Out of this decay came the message of our sages. Out of this decay came a galaxy of stars of the first magnitude, one following the other to hand over the torch of religion from generation to generation.

The Sun of Chaitanya had long set. The firmament was covered with a deep gloom. The ancient wisdom and culture of the East became things of the past. Religion and religious ideas had lost prestige. Man forgot his divine nature. There was a serious crisis. There was a peculiar fermentation and excitement on all sides. The advancing tide of materialism washed the land with its destructive flood. The world required a new adjustment, a new wave of power. A potent voice was necessary to dispel the gathering clouds of superstition and ignorance. The time was ripe for the fair flower of human life—one with the

* A speech delivered by Mr. N. Kesava Iyengar, B. A. B. L., Advocate, at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavagudi, on the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, on the 6th February 1921.

brilliant head of Sankara and the large and expansive heart of Ramanuja. After a long and gloomy night, a star of the first magnitude burst in the eastern horizon. The prophet of love, devotion and realisation loomed at Dakshinesvar. Sri Ramakrishna shone by divine light, taught sublime philosophy and true *Bhakti*, rent the veil that concealed man from his divine nature, preached the sweet doctrine of spiritual realisation to every one, opened the gates of the highest spirituality to one and all, and scattered many a pearl worth their gathering before a race of ancient lineage and hoary traditions.

It was for his illustrious disciple to raise a grand edifice on the broad foundation laid by Sri Ramakrishna. It was for his illustrious disciple to revive the sinking pulse of the nation. It was for his illustrious disciple to shake the civilised world with sublime thoughts of religion, to take off the film from the eyes of the religious world—to proclaim the triumph of Vedanta, to bring into existence a universal religion of head and heart. It was for his illustrious disciple to give back to the Indians the heritage of their sages—to bring to the masses the glorious ideals stored up in books or hidden in the forests and the monasteries.

Swami Vivekananda came to meet the pressing wants of the age, to wash away the evils of the world with his life-blood, to bring us glad tidings from heaven, to infuse new life into us and to bring forth many generations of reformed men and to continue to live in them and they in him. The Swami is a daring messenger sent by God. The Swami is a link in the chain of prophets. His teachings are universal, practical and best-suited to the necessities of the age. The Swami taught: "This is an age of reason. We cannot fall back upon blind faith. India requires that the eternal truths of the Vedas should be given to her in her pristine purity. Religion must be rationalistic. Religion must have a welding force. Religion must bind man and man in golden bonds of sympathy to help India in her onward march of progress and reform." The Swami advocated a Vedanta making for a new national spirit, for a spirit of public service, for a spirit of a religious national life and for a spirit of social unity and reform. He held that our religion properly understood and practised is

most conducive to human progress. He strained every nerve to raise the depressed classes in the social scale by education and culture. The Swami was for sea voyage and insisted on equal education for men and women in India. He looked down upon the evil practice of child-marriage in India, and the multiplication of babies by babies. He strove hard to fuse the Hindu and the Mohammedan into a common love for the motherland. He saw no difficulty in the Hindus, the Mohammedans and the Christians following their own religious creeds and worshipping the same God by different names, living side by side and striving for righteousness, purity and noble-living under the influence of high ideals. He bridged the gulf between race and race, caste and caste by preaching the common unity of the Vedic ideals—underlying the apparent divergent practices prevailing in India. He proved that the three systems of Indian philosophy are only different versions of the same truth seen from different points of view, all leading to the same goal. He removed the gross misconception that the Hindu religion is a religion of idolatry. He clothed the dry bone of religion with flesh and blood. The dead and the dry religion succumbed to the loving and sweet doctrine that he preached and practised. The Swami clearly pointed out that the Eastern and Western ideals are necessary and both have their grandeur and glory. He preserved the pristine purity of the teachings of the Hindu scriptures and at the same time, incorporated the great ideal of the West. He held that the earning of worldly possessions is a necessary duty leading to national greatness, that the acquisition of wealth is for distribution among the poor. He held that religion is the main spring of the Hindu national life. He held that the eternal principles of Hinduism satisfy all the spiritual cravings of humanity and that the end and aim of life is to realise God and the real fruit of spiritual realisation is supreme, humility and selflessness. He held that the path to progress is to go out and expand and that exclusiveness is the cause of our downfall. He held that the true method of reform is construction but not destruction. He held that we must learn something of mechanical and scientific civilisation from the West to increase our material prosperity and teach religion to the spiritually-starving nations of the world. He propounded

the highest truths of philosophy and religion in the simplest language, now in the guise of an allegory and now of a beautiful simile or metaphor. Whenever he spoke he aimed at planting in the heart the arrows of conviction. To his countrymen his stirring and inspiring speeches were a trumpet-call to duty. He exhorted them to cast off the customs and superstitions of the degenerate days. He exhorted them to rise to the grand and noble conception of the Vedanic divinity of man. In active or contemplative life, he preached strength, courage and nobility of character. His simplicity and purity of life checked the tide of wickedness in all its forms. He inspired in all hearts a feeling of admiration for what is pure and noble and drew a tribute of respect and veneration from all. He condemned none, but saw God in all, in the saint and the sinner, the dear and the despised. He had the patience of Christ and the generosity of the Sun that shines everywhere; to him, the world was the field of labour and the world was one family and its parent the Almighty God. His love knew no bounds. His love rolled over the whole of India bringing solace to everyone. The saint and the sinner had a share in his mercy. The Brahmin and the Pariah dined together in their love of God and mercy and then ands drank of the cup of love, devotion and faith prepared by the great sage. The Swami trod the path that patriots have trod. He loved his country as he loved his God. There was always a warm corner in the heart of our Swami for this ancient land of India. His soul throbbed with tenderness and anguish over the lot of his countrymen. The last throb of his heart beat for the poor, the degraded and the miserable. The Swami eagerly looked forward to a revived India, rid of all its long-standing evils, standing out like a beacon-light to faltering nations of the world, bringing life and vigour to the decaying races of mankind, proclaiming humanity, fraternity and peace all round, voicing forth the power of divinity in humanity and radiating God's power and light in all directions.

The Swami has now gone to that unknown land from whose bosom no traveller returns. The Swami now rests from his labours, happy in that blissful serenity which comes to all those that have faithfully discharged their duty, but leaves be-

hind him the memory of his holiness and the priceless legacy of his teachings. The Swami's mission is a divine mission. His calling is high and holy. His fame is the property of the Indian nation. His renown will fill India in after ages. His good words still bloom and smell sweet and establish the Swami's claim to a niche in the temple of religious fame to echo down his name through the halls of time until time shall be no more.

It is now our duty to render the Swami the humble tribute of our esteem and gratitude for the great service rendered to mankind, for his deep wisdom and incalculable power, for his rigid self-control and fervent devotion and for his message of glad tidings, contributive to religious progress. This life deserves our careful study. His greatness should excite our admiration and challenge the spontaneous gratitude and esteem of all. His life reminds us all to make our lives sublime. His precepts and example should stir up our best energies to attain to the sublimity of his life. God is no the God of any one race or sect. He is the God of all mankind, of all space and time. Our horizon is due to all the sages who preceded the Swami and paved the way for him, unbiased by local influences, party feelings, or sectarian bigotry. Nor must we refuse our profound reverence to those that are carrying on the blessed work of religion after him in the remote parts of the world.

These are the days of civilisation and enlightenment. These are the days of trade, enterprise and industry. These are the days of the march of progress and advancement of knowledge. In the boasted march of the intellect, as we sail along the ever-widening ocean of civilisation we are stupefied and lost in material prosperity. We fling religion and morality to the winds. We are hurried into a blind and boundless materialism. Great empires crumble into decay. Nations rise and fall. Where are the Cæsars and Kaisars? Their deeds are written in blood. Their deeds are written in water. One nation digs the grave of another. The greatness of one nation is built on the ruins of another. Nations have come upon the stage of the world, played their parts vigorously for a time and disappeared without leaving a ripple on the ocean of time. But Swami Vivekananda stands fresh and young before us like a

hero of yesterday. His uncrowned head is enthroned in the heart of mankind. He has long been taken into the bosom of every Indian household and has long been enshrined in every Indian heart. Where is the Indian home where his name is not a household word? Where is the Indian town where his name has not penetrated? Where is the Indian who does not carry on his brow the impress of his teachings? Where spirituality is honoured you will find him there, where homage is tendered to holiness you will find him there. Where empire is established over the forces of nature, there you will find him. A sage cannot die. His claims are the claims of immortality. He alone is immortal among mortals. Even from the silence of the tomb, he speaks with a potent voice; even from his ashes cry his wonted fires. Our immortal Swamiji is not dead. His spirit is now in our midst. He lives in us, through us and by us. His spirit now pervades the genius of this place, emancipated from the fetters of flesh and blood—ever calling, "Awake, arise and stop not till you reach the goal." Remember the land whose snow-capped mountains look into the very mysteries of heaven. Remember the land whose ancient civilisation stretched back far into the dawn of the past. Remember the land whence religion and philosophy have again and again marched out and deluged the world, bringing life and vigour to the decaying races of mankind. Remember the broad foundation on which India stands. Remember the rock on which the glory of India lies. Remember that you are the descendants of an ancient and religious race. Their blood courses in your veins. Their potentialities tingle in every drop of your blood. Have faith in that blood, have tremendous faith in yourselves. Have the faith that eternal power is lodged in every one of your souls. Atheism cannot exist in your constitution.

When you are lost in the wilderness of doubts when the night of despair is about to descend on you with her dark wings, you have Swami Vivekananda to bring back a ray of hope and confidence to your slinking hearts and to guide your faltering feet till you reach the goal. Will you therefore shake the foundations of India? Will you disown your parentage? Will you neglect the rich legacy bequeathed to you by our Swami? Will you dry

the spring of the forces that have moulded the genius of the Hindu nation? Will you look with cold indifference on the divine message of Swami Vivekananda?

If you wish to rise in the scale of nations, if you value your future, if you love your country, if you wish to shine in the eyes of posterity, if true Aryan blood dances in your veins, in the name of progress, in the name of duty, in the name of patriotism, in the sacred name of our Swami, in the holy name of God, soar into the realms of Swami Vivekananda, make the life sublime, leave foot prints on the sands of time, surround your names with a halo, raise in the temple of your hearts a monument worthy of the great sage, devote yourselves to the worship of those ideals which were his, march onward for the consummation of your destinies under his guidance and focussing the light that comes from every sage in the prism of India and uniting them into the one light which shall flood the world and blend in the divine wisdom and drinking the ambrosial sweetnes of religion and bathing in the perennial fountains of life, work music and harmony in the universal law of nations.

TRUE RENUNCIATION.

THE STORY OF KING SIKHIDHWAJ AND CHUDALA.

(Adapted from the *Yoga-Vasistha Maharamayana*)

(Concluded from page 46)

HEARING these words of wisdom from the Brahman boy, Sikhdhwaj with a tearful countenance began to say, "O Divine child! After a long time, I am to-day awakened from my mistaken path. Through my foolishness I have given up the company of the Sadhus and have come to live in the forest. Now you are my Guru, my spiritual father and friend. I am your disciple. Be pleased to show your mercy to me. Tell me the Supreme Truth which would conduce to my well-being and knowing which I will have desire for nothing else."

Chudala said: "If my words be of any good to you, listen attentively. It is true that you have renounced your family, friends, relatives and your kingdom, but just as the clear autumn sky is on the outside unobstructed by any clouds, yet is surcharged with fine particles of aqueous vapour, so you, even after giving up all external possessions, have not been able to free yourself from the subtle ignorance in the form of the internal egoistic idea. It is no reason that because you have renounced your family and kingdom you should as a necessary sequel attain to the state of supreme Bliss. That state is one of positive self-existent Bliss, attained after much effort. When the internal knot of your heart in the form of the subtle ego-idea will, by your continuous dwelling upon it, attain big proportions, all your renunciation of the external possessions of kingdom etc., will be rendered futile. How is all-renunciation possible for him in whose heart a jot of the idea of ego dwells? The loss of the idea of egoistic desire and possession is the real fruit of renunciation. When you have not been able to estimate your renunciation by the measure of absence of egoistic feeling, then both renunciation and absence of desire have fled from you. Starting to renounce with a detached heart you have in the end become bound in the egoistic idea of renunciation and engaged in futile austerities impelled by an excessive desire for mortification, have paved the way for your own miseries. He who giving up the near and present Infinite Bliss of the Supreme goes after excessive mortification for the attainment of a finite object, for the satisfaction of the idea of having renounced, is a self-killer. O Sadhu! Having given up the bondage of your kingdom, you have fallen in the mere terrible bondage of the ego and its impulses. The restlessness and disquietude of the mind you had while in your kingdom, has been doubled by the thoughts and vain imaginings of your austerities in the forest."

Sikhidhwaj answered: "O youth! Yes, it is true, but I cannot understand your words that having given up family and wealth and kingdom, I have not been able to renounce anything."

Chudala said: "O Tāpī! Wife, home, wealth, kingdom, dead; the circumstances of royalty do not belong to your subjective Self; why

then in renouncing them do you attribute to yourself the egoistic idea of having renounced? The subtle internal desire in the form of the ego-idea is still reigning within you. By giving up this internal desire, this idea of me and mine, this tentacle of selfishness which the ego throws out to grasp external objects as one's own, you will reach the supreme state beyond all grief."

Sikhidhwaj said: "Sir, perhaps there are possessions nearer to me which are a detraction from complete renunciation, a bar to the Supreme Bliss. The kingdom etc. are not mine but I may have the idea of possession for this forest of trees and creepers; therefore I now draw back all idea of possession from this forest." Chudala said: "The hills, the forests, the trees, and water are not in reality yours, but by your mind, you grasp and ascribe them to you. How then by giving up that which is not yours can you impute to yourself the idea of having renounced? A far stronger bond than that in the form of the internal idea of 'me and mine,' its grasping of external objects as constitutive of the Self, is yet un-renounced by you. If you can give up your love for the ego-idea, you will attain the supreme state beyond all grief."

Sikhidhwaj said: "These are not mine, but this hut of leaves is mine, and I root out all idea of possession with regard to it. Now I have reached complete renunciation." Chudala said: "These trees, creepers and shrubs, and your hut are not yours really, but you are tied to them only through the link of the mind and the ego. A far stronger desire for sense-objects than these is lurking in your mind. When this extreme desire for sense-objects which pivots itself upon the idea of the ego will be renounced by you, you will attain the Supreme Bliss."

Sikhidhwaj said: "If there is still a trace of the idea of possession in me, then this hut, and its thatch, this staff, kamandalu, deer-skin are not mine; I renounce them also." Saying this he collected all his things of use and set fire to them. The fire burning consumed all the things of the king. Then Sikhidhwaj in a bare body and with a pleased mind began to say: "O Divine child! Now I have reached the height of renunciation. I have nothing left to call my possession, I have become very happy." Chudala said: "O King, you are falsely imputing to yourself the Supreme Bliss by the mistaken

idea of giving up everything. You have not been able to renounce everything. The strong knot of the mind, the root of egoistic desire and possession by which you grasp external objects as your own and superimpose them on the Self, is still predominant in you."

Hearing these words of Chudala, the King Sikhihwaj thought for a while and said: "Even now this body of flesh and blood, surrounded by the limbs and sense-organs, is remaining to me. By throwing myself down from on high I will destroy this body, then surely I shall have renounced everything." Saying this, the King arose to throw himself down into the neighbouring ravine.

Seeing the King rise to destroy his body, Chudala obstructing him said: "This body is inert. There is no chance of any evil to you from this inert body. As a log of wood is drifted by the waves, so this body is driven by another. It has no independent power of its own but if you can renounce that which is afflicting your body, by which you have imposed the body-idea on yourself, then your renunciation will be complete. Otherwise even by you destroying the body it will sprout up again and again. Renunciation is not compassed by the destruction of the body, the sacrifice of the kingdom or the burning of the hut. The renunciation of that from which the idea of egoistic possession and feeling with regard to them has risen, the seed and producer of all, is complete renunciation.

Sikhihwaj questioned: "What is that thing which is the producer and seed of all?"

Chudala said: "The *chitta*, the ego-mind and the sense-mind, and the limiting adjuncts which they superimpose on the Self, is that all-productive principle of nescience. The renunciation of *chitta* is the complete renunciation of finite sense-objects. The *chitta* is the field for the sprouting of the Samisara (world). When that field is rendered barren and unfertile how can the seeds sprout? Therefore, O wise one, ponder well what is the real object of renunciation (viz., the ego and its ascriptions), and then renouncing that give up even the egoistic imputation to your-self of having renounced."

Sikhihwaj said: "Sir, I have many times tried

to give up the *chitta*, still I have not been able to renounce it. It has insistently besieged me with its finite sense-objects and egoistic feeling with regard to them. First indicate to me the nature of the *chitta* and then speak about the way of abjuring it."

Chudala said: O blessed one! Desire and the idea of egoistic possession is the nature of the *chitta*. The word *chitta* is but a synonym of desire. The ignorance of the Atman is the seed for the tree of *chitta*. Who am I? How have I come to have my present mental ascriptions and *upadhis*—by such a discrimination of the Reality, the tree of *chitta* is consumed by the flame of knowledge. Therefore destroy by the fire of knowledge the seed of desire.

Sikhihwaj said: "O serene one! I have repeatedly thought and discriminated, that I am not the earth, the hills, the forests, the movements of the leaves, this body of flesh and blood, the organs of sensation or knowledge, the mind, the Buddhi, or the ego. These are all inert and derived, principles. Afterwards I have found that there is one Conscious Self which is the primal source and cause of these substances, like trees and shrubs. O Muni! thus trying to break down the limiting barriers of the ego and wash away its impurities of the mind, I cannot yet know the internal supreme Intelligence of the Essence of Bliss who is beyond these limitations. Therefore I am much afflicted by the sorrow of the mind."

Chudala said: "O King! Really there is no independent, original substance called the *chitta*, the ego and the sense-mind. What appears as the mind, its finite thoughts and desires, is but the Infinite Intelligence and Bliss of the Self. There is no world as such, no finite objects you see, but all is the One Brahman. It is futile for you to seek to renounce the finite objects and the desires of the mind for them without substituting in their place the vision of the Reality—the Brahman; for they are not independent and underived, but derivations and limitations of the Bliss and Consciousness and Reality of the Brahman. Only by inducing the vision of Reality, of the Brahman are they truly and successfully renounced. You are in reality stainless and unchanging. That which has no beginning, no end, that which is ever the same, devoid of birth, increase and decay,

which is without any stain, a partial manifestation of which is the world, which is at the source of all as the Primal Existence,—you are that Reality, the Atman."

Hearing these words of Chudala, the King Sikkidhwaj with a delightful heart and voice choked with emotion said: "O benign one! By your

words my ignorance and delusion is vanished to-day. By your gracious words, I have to-day seen the most exalted state of the Infinite Bliss. That divine nectar which I was searching after in vain since my birth, I have obtained to-day by your blessed company. Infinite is the glory of the blessed company of Sadhus!"

SKI-VIVEKANANDA-RAHASYA-DASAKAM.

भीविवेकानन्दरहस्यदशकं ।

युगधर्मस्थ धैचित्रधै देशकालविषसंनं ।
खोकानां रुचिभेदश्च भावशिक्षाविपर्ययं ॥
योऽनुपमस्ववृत्तेषु दर्शयितुमिह स्फुटं ।
खोकपित्तानुकूलत्वात् कृत्स्नभावानुभावकः ॥
कल्पादिविद्वास्तिकोऽभूद् वा कदाचित् संयाकुलः ।
कर्चिद् तार्किकश्चरेन्द्रः कविद्वा ब्राह्मसाधकः ॥
नानाविवरज्ञभावानामाश्रयो भूतनाशवद् ।
कोऽपि अयति सोऽनुदृतः परमाद्भुतवृत्तधृक् ॥

वद्या भूतविद्वारोऽपि कीलादेविक्रमसिद्धये ।
खोकपित्तासौकर्यात् विवकृत्य भक्तिसाधनं ॥
कल्पिदभूष्ट वैतत्यः कुण्डः शुभकार्किकः ।
कल्पादिवृद्ध वैष्णवद्वेष्टा भक्तोपहासतदपरः ॥
नानाविवरज्ञभावाक्ष वैचित्रियात् यत्तथा भुवि ।
विवरागां शुद्धुर्वेद्यः रहस्यमिव विद्यते ॥
अनुलयस्वावपूर्वकत्वाद् धीराणामपि तुर्गमः ।
स महाकृहकी कोऽपि कृहकं नोपपर्तु ॥

वै जडो केवलं संस्कर्य धीदतिगोभरेश्वरः ।
किञ्चार्थस्त्रियोऽप्यस्माभिस्तस्थ गौरववावते ॥
ततोऽप्य वाहसन्देही लक्ष्मा जन्मतिष्ठो प्रभोः ।
अत्र यिदी लक्ष्मी तै तथा कृदार्थतां वज ॥

TRANSLATION.

Glory unto the wonderful one, the embodiment of all ideas, with the most wonderful turns of temperament like those of Bhutanath, the manifestor of many different contradictory qualities,—who reflected vividly in his peerless character the many-sidedness of the age (Yuga Dharma) due to the influence of the Time-spirit and the changed tastes of the people brought on by the transformation of ideas and education, in order to favour the teaching of the present humanity; and who as a consequence sometimes played a sceptical enquirer, sometimes an equipped and fearless logician, while at other times a Brahma-jnani.

May the Great Seer-magician dispel our illusion, whose personality, owing to its embodying different contradictory qualities and diverse manners, has been a complicated phenomenon to the fool and even hardly comprehensible to the wise, because of the unprecedentedness and incomparability of his personality,—just as Chaitanya, though himself Bhakti incarnate, sometimes transcended the appearances of a devotee, sometimes acted as an arid logic-chopper, sometimes an antagonist to the Vaishnavas and sometimes a mocker of the devotees in order to show forth his multiform Lila.

Who is to measure the greatness or littleness of one, whom the Lord of Dakshineswar alone did fully appreciate?

Yield, therefore, to that Siva-Narendra on this birthday of the Lord, casting aside doubt and debate and be blessed thereby.

RADHARAMAN NANDY SARASWATI VIDYABRUSHNIN.

THE FIFTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Belur Math.

The 59th anniversary of the birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on Sunday, Feb. 6, at the Belur Math with great success. The special feature of the day was the Seva of 'Daridra Narayanas' on whom the Swami looked with a special eye of consideration and reverence. His own words were: "The best religion of to-day is that every man should according to his means go out into the streets to search for one, two, six or twelve hungry 'Narayanas,' take them into their houses, feed them, clothe them and offer them all the worship they could give to their images." An incident of the day was the unexpected arrival of Mahatma Gandhi and party with some ladies who came to pay a tribute of homage to Swami Vivekananda's memory—the patriot-saint of India. The Mahatma and his companions asked many questions—as to how many institutions the Mission had, how many workers—the Mayavati Ashrama on the Himalayas, how to go there and so forth. They then visited the temple-room which was strewn with roses, the offerings of devotees, and gaily decorated and enquired of the method of worship, not overlooking even the figure of Mahavir in the temple-room. The attention of the Mahatma was then drawn to the figure of Sri Ramakrishna's wife and on enquiry he was told of the life led by her—her madonnahood,—her life-long purity. They then visited the "Sayan Ghar" or Resting House of Sri Ramakrishna lying alongside, where some of the articles used by Sri Ramakrishna are still preserved with great care and reverence. Mahatma Gandhi touched the mattress used by Sri Ramakrishna and was shown the handwriting of Sri Ramakrishna Dev as preserved in "Mahabir Pala" written by him. The Mahatma, and his companions were astonished to see the fairness and neatness of writing of him who could with difficulty write his name out and spoke about his unlearned wisdom.

Bangalore Cantonment.

Under the auspices of the Vedanta Society, Bangalore Cantonment, the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekanandaji was celebrated in the Chatur Veda Siddhanta Sabha School premises on Sunday,

the 13th February, with much eclat. At noon about 800 poor brethren were fed sumptuously in the name of that great modern Saint of India. In the afternoon there was Bhajana, with harmonium, violin and mridangam. In the evening Mr. C. B. Srinivasa Rao M. A., of General and Revenue Secretariat, Mysore State, delivered a stirring speech on the Swamiji. After dusk the Swamiji's photo was well decorated with flowers and ferns and placed on a Vimana was taken round in procession through the principal streets on the Cantonment, preceded by the Indian Brass Band. The Swamis of Somananda and Durgananda of the local Sri Rama krishna Mission graced the occasion with their holy presence. The function closed at about 9 p. m. with Mangalarati and distribution of prasadam to the audience and to all the students of the depressed classes.

Madras.

The 59th birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with great eclat at Madras. A beautifully decorated portrait of the Swami was installed in the spacious Hall of the Math.

The celebration began with Bhajana from early morning. Many *sankirtan* parties from various parts of the city arrived. One of the parties was that of the local Charnars who were received with equal cordiality, though generally they are treated as untouchables. About two thousand poor 'Narayanas' were fed. In the evening a public meeting was held when Mr. N. Subramanya Iyer delivered an interesting lecture on "The Vivekananda spirit and the Problem of evil." By Vivekananda spirit he meant not so much his spirit of renunciation, his catholic love or his spirit of study and research but his evangelistic work, his missionary spirit, his spirit of world-propaganda of the message of the spirit. The world, the lecturer said, is in great pain and confusion. Nations are warring against each other, there is rivalry between capitalists and labourers, distrust between man and man, both as individuals and as aggregates. He traced the present condition of the world to conflict, rivalry and competition. The only way out, he suggested was the con-

structive activity of harmony, of interdependence between nation and nation, class and class, sex and sex. He said that Swami Vivekananda first preached to the West the 'live and let live' co-operative oneness preached by our sages so that the West might correct its challengeful and competitive separateness. The universe is one, and no part of it can be happy or free when any other is not. This is the Vivekananda spirit, the duty of world-propagandism, the duty of world-guidance. In conclusion he urged that this great work of the Swami must be taken up by us and that we are to organise ourselves for it.

The gathering dispersed after *Aratrikam* and distribution of *Prasadam*.

Benares.

The 59th Birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the R. K. Advaita Ashrama, Benares City, on Sunday, the 6th Feb. A large portrait of the Swami was placed on a raised platform in the spacious hall of the Ashrama. The picture was profusely garlanded and the hall was decorated with ferns and flowers. From early morning worship began in the temple-room attended with Bhajana and music which added a sweet devotional strain to the hearts of all those who were present on the occasion. The Swami in body took delight in feeding the poor 'Narayanas' and so that was the special feature of the day. About 800 poor were sumptuously fed. In the evening a large meeting was held in the Ashrama premises. About 600 persons, ladies and gentlemen, attended the meeting. Swami Saradananda, Secretary, R. K. Mission, took the chair. Swamis Sharvananda and Suddhananda addressed the meeting on "The message of Swami Vivekananda to the modern world," in English and Bengali respectively. The latter, in the course of his highly interesting speech dwelt upon the present situation and clearly pointed out Swami Vivekananda's view on the regeneration of India. Pandit Yajnanarayan Upadhyaya M.A., B.L. delivered a nice speech in Hindi. Sj. Upendra Chandra Datta M.A. read a paper on the message of the Swami which was very much appreciated (printed elsewhere). A highly instructive speech on the synthetic view of the harmony of all religions as lived by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and as exemplified in the life of Swami Vivekananda was delivered

by Swami Saradananda. The meeting terminated with a closing song. Bhajana and music continued till a late hour in the evening. All were served with *prasad*.

The Tithi was observed on 30th Jan. and the day was one of fasting and prayers by those who performed Viraja Homa and entered into the holy life of Sannyas with the twofold object of attaining personal salvation and doing good to the world. Twenty Brahmacharins took the life of Sannyas and fifteen youngmen took the vow of Brahmacarya.

Bangalore.

The 59th Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore City, on the 30th January and the 6th February, 1921, with the usual joyousness and enthusiasm. The former day was that of the Tithi Puja when the gentlemen of the place associated intimately with the local Ashrama joined in worship and a large number of children of the locality were treated to sweets. On the latter day was the public celebration in a big pandal erected in the Ashrama compound for the purpose. Bhajana parties from different parts of the City and Cantonment and Madigarpalya came in procession through the City and arrived in the Ashrama about noon. They were served with *prasad* and about a thousand poor people were fed besides. In the afternoon at 3 p. m. a large number of the admirers of the Swamiji began to assemble and the function of the evening commenced with *Harikatha* in Kannada on the Swamiji's life composed specially for the occasion by Brahma Sri Koppal Jayaramachar. The *katha* was a most inspiring performance and went on till about 6-30 p. m. and was followed by a very thoughtful speech in English by Mr. N. Kesava Iyengar B.A., B.L., a member of the local Bar. The lecture was highly appreciated and is published elsewhere. Rajasabhabhushana Karpur Srinivasa Rao, Retired Chief Engineer of Mysore, then gave a short account in Kannada of his personal reminiscences of the Swamiji. With *arati* and distribution of *prasad* the function came to a close at 8 p.m. It is to be noted that this year the assemblage both of ladies and gentlemen was unprecedentedly large in spite of other distractions. It was also announced that the local branch

intended starting a periodical in Kannada containing translations of valuable Bengali works on the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Kuala Lumpur (Federated Malay States).

The 59th Birthday Anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda came off on Sunday, the 6th February, and the occasion was celebrated at the premises of the Vivekananda Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur, by a whole day programme of events.

A large-sized portrait of the Swami was installed in the hall on the main platform artistically decorated to represent a miniature hill scenery while the hall, the building, the compound and the main entrance were tastefully decorated with flags, evergreens, palm leaves, paper lanterns etc., and lavishly illuminated with electric and other lights.

Harinama Sankirtana (singing in praise of the Lord) was kept going in the hall by parties of Bhaktas during the forenoon while preparations were going on outside for the feeding of the poor 'Narayanas.'

As soon as Aratikam was performed at 12 noon, the chief item in the day's programme was commenced and nearly 4000 poor 'Narayanas' were treated to a sumptuous breakfast under a specially erected pandal. The arrangements for the serving of the food was undertaken and carried out by a band of about 50 young volunteers in a very orderly manner.

At 7 p.m., a crowded meeting was held in the Ashrama hall under the Presidency of Dr. P.N. Sen. After the usual chanting of Davaram (sacred hymn) and the garlanding of the Swami's portrait a number of sacred songs in Sanskrit and Taanil were recited by the students of Ashrama and by the pupils of the Vivekananda Tamil School.

Dr. J. H. Joshi of Ipoh spoke in English on the Life and Teachings of the Swami, approaching the subject in a truly devotional spirit. He alluded to many an incident in the Swami's life, his birth, his childhood and studentship, his search for one who had seen God and his subsequent meeting with the great Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar temple, his renunciation and wanderings as a Sannyasin throughout the length and breadth of India mixing with people of every walk of life from the ruling Prince to the peasant and studying their problems, his visit to America and Europe and triumphant

return to his mother country, the establishment of the Sri Ramakrishna Math and the Mission, and concluded with a reference to some of the essential points in the message he had delivered to humanity in general and to his countrymen in particular.

Mr. S. S. Dorai spoke in Tamil, quoting suitable passages from Tamil works, on some of the aspects of the Swami's teachings and appealed to the audience to co-operate with the monastic representative of the Mission now resident in the Ashrama in the carrying on of the many works of service to which the Swami's life was dedicated.

The Chairman in his concluding remarks referred among other things to the services the Swami had rendered to the cause of the Hindus by removing many a false notion from the minds of the Western people about their religious beliefs.

Srinath Swami Videhananda in thanking all those who have in such self-sacrificing manner contributed to the success of the day's functions drew particular attention to one of the most prominent features of the Swami Vivekananda's teachings, the all-embracing and universal nature of the truths of true religion giving a death blow to all narrowness, sectarianism and bigotry. He appealed to the audience, illustrating with apt parables, not to lapse into lethargy but to make an endeavour to bring into practical life all the good things they had heard that evening. The meeting and with it the day's functions concluded with the singing of Devaram.

Some select sayings of the Swami Vivekananda were printed through the kind help of Mr. M. Sundaram Pillai and distributed on the occasion.

Kankhal.

The 59th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with success on the 6th Feb. The Tithipuja of the Swami was performed on the previous Sunday with Puja and feeding of some of the Mahatmas of the locality. On the day of the public anniversary many gentlemen and Mahatmas of the locality were present, and the whole Ashrama was tastefully decorated. Some Sadhus delivered very interesting and instructive speeches in Hindi on the life and teachings of the great Swami. They dwelt at length on what great work the late Swami had done both in the West and in India during his lifetime, and after his death what work the Ramakrishna Mission which was founded by him was still doing in various ways for the service of the fellowmen.

The lectures were appreciated by the audience specially by the Mahatmas. In the afternoon more than one thousand poor people were sumptuously fed by the loving hands of the members of the Ashrama.

Vaniyambady.

The fifty-ninth anniversary of the birthday of Swami Vivekanandaji was celebrated in the premises of the Ramakrishna Mission, Pudur, Vaniyambadi on Sunday, the 6th Feb. The celebration consisted of Bhajana, Sankirtan, feeding the poor and Aradhana with musical band throughout the day.

In the evening, under the presidency of Mr. K. R. Krishnaswamy Iyengar B. A., L. T., a lecture was delivered by Mr. C. Venkataswamy, the president of the Math, on the epoch-making character of the Swamiji's career, the spiritual, social and patriotic aspects of his teachings and on the ever-memorable Vedantic message of the East to the West borne by one of the greatest sons of India.

After the speech of Mr. C. Venkataswamy, the President, made an effective speech and said that the Swami's wise teachings regarding the progress of India on Indian lines should be strictly and cautiously followed by his countrymen and that religious instructions were quite essential to the Indian students along with their other studies. Mr. C. Venkataswamy, thanked the chairman and the audience with blessings in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. Then the celebration came to a close with the distribution of *prasadam*.

Lohajang, Dacca.

The Lohajang Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, started last year, observed for the first time the 59th birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda with great eclat. The Tithipuja was duly performed. *Nam-sankirtan* was conducted throughout the day and *prasad* was distributed amongst the Sevaks and the gentlemen of the locality. The Daividnarayans numbering more than 500 were sumptuously fed with *prasad*.

Coonoor.

The fifty-ninth birthday celebration of Srimat Swami Vivekanandaji was celebrated at Sri Balasubramania Swami Temple, Wellington Market, on the 6th Feb. The programme was as follows : (1) Puja and Bhajan 2 p. m. to 4 p. m. (2) Lecture on the Life of Swamiji 4 to 5 p. m. (3) Procession 5 to 7 p. m. (4) Distribution of Prasad.

The anniversary was also celebrated at other places viz. at the Sevashrama, Brindaban, Mayavati etc.

NEWS AND NOTES.

OWING to our late receipt of the V. P. amounts for the subscription of the P. B. for 1921, we were

delayed in despatching the February issue of P. B. This again has caused a delay in the issue of March P. B. We hope to make up the delay soon.

We have received the following Press Communiqué from the Publicity Officer, U. P. :

The question of Utar in the Kumaon hills was recently the subject of a statement by Government in which it was announced that Government hoped to effect an early and drastic reduction of Utar with a view to its eventual abolition. Subsequently, on the 5th of March Thakur Jodh Singh B. Negi Sahib moved the following resolution :-

"That this Council recommends that the Coolie Utar (impressed labour) system in vogue in Kumaon be abolished within a definite period of say one year and that it should be replaced by some such method as shall not entail any taxation on the people."

To this resolution Rai Narain Datt Chirwal Sahib moved an amendment to substitute the word 'immediately' for the words 'within the period of say one year.'

The Hon'ble Finance Member in accepting the resolution and opposing the amendment announced that while it was the considered policy of Government to abolish Utar absolutely with the least possible delay, he could not bind Government as suggested in the amendment.

The majority of the members of the Legislative Council recognised that the system could not be abolished by a mere stroke of the pen; and the amendment was lost and the resolution carried.

The Government has had under its consideration the steps to be taken in fulfilment of the promise given by the Hon'ble Finance Member. It has been decided that coolie Utar should be abolished almost immediately in the Naini Tal district as well as throughout the most thickly populated parts of the Almora and Garhwal districts and in all the tracts now covered by coolie agencies which supply means of transport along all the main routes. The Government will take over and pay for all existing coolie agencies and will provide them on routes where they are required but do not exist at present. The Council will be asked at a very early date to vote the necessary funds for the maintenance of the coolie agencies. A sum of Rs. 45,000 has already been entered in the budget for the provision of paid coolie agencies and pack mules. The allotment will be supplemented by further grants as found necessary. In the remoter tracts Utar will be abolished as soon as possible, that is to say, as soon as means can be devised to replace it. The result, it is hoped, will be achieved in the course of a few months.

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Katha Upanishad, I. iv. 6.

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Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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APRIL 1921

[No. 297

THE HINDU'S LOVE FOR THE GANGES.*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

DO you remember the Ganges at Hrishikesh? That clear bluish water—in which one can count the fins of fishes five yards below the surface,—that wonderfully sweet, ice-cold “charming water of the Ganges,” and that wonderful sound of “Hara, Hara” of the running water, and the echo of “Hara, Hara” from the neighbouring mountain-falls? Do you remember that life in the forest, the begging of *Mādhukari* alms, eating on small islands of rock in the bed of the Ganges, hearty drinking of that water with the palms, and the fearless wandering of fishes all around for crumbs of bread? You remember that love for Ganges water, that glory of the Ganges, the touch of its water that makes the mind

dispassionate, that Ganges flowing over the Himalayas, through Srinagar, Tehri, Uttarkasi, and Gangotri,—some of you have seen even the source of the Ganges! But there is a certain unforgettable fascination in our Ganges of Calcutta, muddy, and whitish—as if from contact with Shiva's body—and bearing a large number of ships on her bosom. Is it merely patriotism or the impressions of childhood?—Who knows? What wonderful relation is this between Mother Ganges and the Hindus? Is it merely superstition? May be. They spend their lives with the name of Ganga on their lips, they die immersed in the water of the Ganges, men from far-off places take away Ganges water with them, keep it carefully in copper vessels, and sip drops of it on holy festive occasions. Kings and princes keep it in jars, and at considerable ex-

*Written en route to the West to a fellow-disciple.

† Meaning, collected from door to door.

pense take the water from Gangotri to pour it on the head of Shiva at Ram-
eshwar? The Hindus visit foreign coun-
tries—Rangoon, Java, Houkong, Madag-
ascar, Suez, Aden, Malta,—and they take
with them Ganges water and the Gita.
The Gita and the sacred water of the
Ganges constitute the Hinduism of the
Hindus. Last time I went to the West,
I also took a little of it with me, fearing
it might be needed, and whenever op-
portunities occurred I used to drink a few
drops of it. And every time I drank, in
the midst of the stream of humanity,
amid that bustle of civilisation, that hurry

of frenzied footsteps of millions of men
and women in the West, the mind at once
became calm and still, as it were. That
stream of men, that intense activity of
the West, that clash and competition at
every step, those seats of luxury and
celestial opulence—Paris, London, New
York, Berlin, Rome—all would disappear
and I used to hear that wonderful sound of
“Hara, Hara,” to see that lonely forest
on the sides of the Himalayas, and feel
the murmuring heavenly River coursing
through the heart and brain and every
artery of the body and thundering forth,
“Hara, Hara, Hara”!

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE human aspect of the life of Sri Ramakrishna is a fitting commentary on the teachings of Vedanta which preaches an Impersonal-personal, a Transcendent-immanent Divinity. The ordinary misconception about Vedantic thought is that it detaches itself from all terrestrial interests and gives no truth-significance to the play of human life, its interests, and hopes, faculties and powers. To think that life, its activities, endeavours and ideals cannot ensoul the spirit of the Brahman, that the rays of Truth cannot play in and around them, uplifting their significance, is singularly to misunderstand the Vedanta and unnecessarily limit its potencies and possibilities. Whether we regard the enlightened life of the spiritual being as *vidya maya*, or as the manifestation in the particular and finite, of a time-less, and self-existent Absolute unaffected by the limitations of manifestation, it matters very little in the end, so far as the spirit-

ual possibilities of life are concerned. We may, following Sankara and his tran-
scendent school, in the interests of main-
taining the stainlessness and unchange-
ability of Brahman, say that the life of
spiritual knowledge under creation is the
nearest approach to the Absolute, or
following the Saiva-Shakta Agama, say
that in creation the Paramashiva re-
mains unaffected by the limitations, the
duality and change of manifested life,—it
comes to pretty much the same effect in
practical life. In both views it is main-
tained that the Absolute is true in its own
truth, that it does not owe any of the
truth of its being to manifestation and
depend for its existence on the Universe.
It is an Absolute, not in the making, but
made, accomplished already, a *parinisthita*
vastu and created manifestation is an
aspect of the Reality, but an aspect which
can be filled with the truth's own being,
either in the view of its being the nearest
step to the Absolute, *sannihita*, or as the

Absolute being stainless, *niranjana*, unaffected by ignorance or bondage. As there are infinite aspects of the Absolute looked at from the standpoint of manifestation, there are possible infinite approaches to it, and this furnishes the basis for the progress and the advance of the Spirit in life embodying more and more comprehensive aspects of the Spirit. Vedanta, rightly understood, does not destroy the life-movement but explains and uplifts it. The life-endeavour, its impulses, ideals and activities are accepted, but without their limitations, their bondage-producing effects, in their soul-expanding and truth-ensoeling aspects.

In this life of Sri Ramakrishna we find no abnormality, no inhumanity, nothing which is alien to human hopes and aspirations or strange to its mentality. His outward life was in its interests and actions like an ordinary human being's, but with the light of Divinity playing in and around it. This eccentricity and abnormality develops in lives which are intoxicated or carried away by the transcendent aspect of the Brahman and cannot reconcile it with manifestation or cannot see the same Spirit underlying all the levels of being.

If the whole of human nature is of a piece, then one's *vyaavahara* should melt easily into the *paagamartha* and although the lower truth will be transcended in a higher, yet in descending to a lower level of being, the truth gathered in a higher realm, will broaden and universalise the former by the light of its greater truth, without denying the element of truth in it or displacing the reality that belongs to it in its own plane. As Swami Vivekananda said: "As one's instinct does not contradict reason, so true intuition cannot con-

tradict reason." Of course as a result of reaching the Spirit, the lower powers, faculties and reason, will be considerably broadened and extended, they will be filled with the spirit's significance of universality and unity. In passing from one level of being to another, one will not feel any incapacity of making it part of a total harmony. The change of the centre of being from one to another will not imply a strangeness or incapacity of moving in its midst. Sri Ramakrishna said: "The Supreme Bhakta accepts all the states, Jagrat, Svapna and Sushupti, and sees the presence of God in all of them." Thus we find in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, his outward state of mind melted easily into his inner mental state, *bhava avastha*, and his *bhava avastha* into his spiritual state, Samadhi. He moved among them as freely as going from one familiar room to another, and was alive and aware in all of them.

It is only when the transcendent-universal Self has not been made a part of the whole being, a habitual centre of activity, that the spiritual life betrays that disharmony and incompatibility in different grades of being. It is then that living in one plane brings an incapacity of living in another, with knowledge. Then, those eccentricities and abnormalities appear, which are in reality a sort of bulwark against the recapture of the new citadel of Self by the limitation and exclusive immersion in the lower being. But as Sri Ramakrishna would say, "A king's son can go up all the stories of the royal house and come down, but the lower officers only to the antechamber or the outer appartments, similarly a wise-knower in the spiritual house." He moves through all with sovereign mastery.

and is equally at home in all. He is master of all and has a powerful hold on all of them.

Therefore we find in the life of Sri Ramakrishna an awareness and aliveness on the physical plane and a vigorous grip on it. His physical perceptions were keen, his observation minute, but all enlightened by the knowledge of the universal Spirit in which he lived. Every physical fact, incident, object was estimated aright, was given its true value, found its right place and relation in the harmony of the whole. His visions did not displace the physical truth of things and facts in their own plane, but brought down from on high and added to it something which the evidences of the sense do not give us, but which included it in a higher order of truths and values, freed from their exclusive and partitive aspects. For example, the ordinary vision sees in physical objects, discrete, discontinuous objects separated from one another, while he saw them as embraced and held in a continuous ocean of consciousness. As he said : "I feel as if all the objects are floating in an ocean of consciousness, like pillows tossed on the waves." "As during the rainy season, the whole earth is saturated with water, so are all objects saturated with consciousness."

Again because he could know the truth of things directly in a *yogic* vision, it did not render him incapable of observing and using his reasoning faculties and discrimination in coming to a right conclusion about things and events in his more normal moods of mind. He was responsive to all the external signs and indications of physical objects, which the ordinary mind accepts through the gates of the

senses, to think and reflect on them in order to arrive at a rational understanding of them and construct ideas and systems. But because of his reaching a freer and more expansive and intense state of consciousness, he was aware of them in their own level with a greater precision and minuteness and his reasoning on them was free from the exclusiveness and partiality of the rationalistic mind, by being co-ordinated with the wider truths and relations which are seen behind the phenomena of life. For example, the rational mind observing the operation of forces in matter and life constructs the idea of a static and dynamic element, a positive and negative polarisation in their operation, but it is only in the abstract intelligence, outside of life, and has modifying influence on the inner consciousness, not a part and parcel of being. Sri Ramakrishna arrived at the very truth by the power of discrimination, but he saw it more intimately by re-viewing it in his inner vision as but the conjoint action of two, yet one, conscious principles, Shiva-Shakti, in the whole phenomena of this universe. There is thus no partition of truth, and what is a fact of the inner mental world is also one of the outer life, but there projected into a more limited and mechanical operation. As a result, it became a living truth of being, an operation and movement of the conscious being and not a mere mechanical law, explaining all phenomena, but outside of human life and experience. The gist is, that the spiritual life does not altogether negate one order of truth, but rescues it from limitations and makes it to be seen in the greater light of a higher order. It does not blunt our perceptions of physical things but makes them more responsive to all that they convey to the sense; it

does not diminish the strenuousness of thinking but broadens and ensouls it by the truth of a universal conscious being.

Similarly in the emotional being, we find in Sri Ramakrishna a great human and personal force of living, but rescued from its narrowing and binding effects by its being attuned to the universal life of Spirit. The realisation of the transcendent truth of Vedanta did not make him incapable of human love, by his regarding all human affections as the figments of *maya*, a bondage and snare to be avoided and trampled under. He loved intensely, far exceeding the power of personal attachment, but it brought no reaction of bondage, ignorance and delusion. Human life itself is a movement of the bliss of the soul, although now projected into a limited and clouded operation in the personal soul of man. When this is seen it is possible to give oneself up to an object, with all the tremendous force of the love of the universal Self, and even in personal love to live in unison with universal life. Then the universal principle is reached and personal love attaining that level brings no contracting and narrowing effect on life.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna as an embodiment of Vedanta therefore belies the charge that Vedanta gives no truth-significance to human life, its strivings and interests, faculties and powers, but by abstracting one from it as a total unreality produces a questionable, un-human, other-worldly perfection. It does not destroy the powers of being and life but ensouls them with truth. They are broadened and expanded, placed on the right foundation of the Spirit. Instead of initiating a limited and dubious action, they are taken for their truth which raises the

present crude life of humanity into the stature of a semi-divinity and uplifts the natural and raw life of man into the image of a powerful and universal spiritual living.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Their Spiritual Relation.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

Continued from page 56.

THE common people blindly following the established standards and opinions of society thus mistook Narendranath as of a haughty and Bohemian temperament, judging from the outsides of his actions, but Sri Ramakrishna never fell into the same mistaken judgment with regard to him. From their first meeting he understood that the appearance of hauteur and pride in him was but the external manifestation of his great faith in himself arising from the consciousness of the great and innate powers of his mind,—his unhesitating free dealings were but indicative of and based on his inner self-control, and his indifference to popular opinion was born of the bliss of a stainless conscience which his pure nature gave him. He understood that the incomparable character of Narendra would bloom like a full-blown lotus and be established in its own greatness and glory. Then coming in contact with the suffering and distressed mortals, the pride and hauteur of his character would melt into a mood of infinite compassion, his great faith in himself would be the means of re-establishing the lost faith and confidence in depressed hearts

and the freedom of his conduct established on an inner self-control would indicate itself to others as but a means and manifestation of the true freedom of the Self.

Thus we find that Sri Ramakrishna was wont to praise Narendranath highly before all. Even knowing that hearing such praise overtly before all, the weak mind of man might be puffed up with pride and might take him to ruin, Sri Ramakrishna departed from the rule in the case of Narendranath, because he felt sure that his mind was above all such petty weaknesses. From a few incidents illustrating this, the reader will understand.

One day Sri Ramakrishna was sitting in company with the famous Brahmo leaders like the high-souled Keshab, Vijoy and others. The youthful Narendra was also sitting there. Sri Ramakrishna in an introspective mood looked with delight at Keshab and Vijoy. After a while looking at Narendranath the picture of the glorious future of his life was depicted in vivid colours before his mind and he compared it in his mind with the mature life of Keshab and others. When the assemblage broke up, he said: "I saw that Narendra had in full eighteen of the powers, by one of which Keshab has attained such eminence in the world. Again I saw that the flame of the light of knowledge was burning brightly in Keshab and Vijoy, but looking at Narendra I found as if the sun of knowledge was shining dispelling even the least trace of ignorance and delusion." Weak-minded people devoid of introspection would have swelled in pride at hearing such high praise from the lips of Sri Ramakrishna, but it produced an altogether different effect in the mind of Narendranath. His mind, endowed with penetrative inner vision, turned upon itself for self-exami-

nation and dispassionately comparing the great qualities of Keshab and Vijoy with his own mental state found himself unworthy of such high praise, and strongly protesting against the words of Sri Ramakrishna he said: "Sir, what do you say? Hearing such words from you, people will take you to be mad. Where is the world-famous Keshab and high-souled Vijoy and where am I, an insignificant school-boy! Please do not make such statements comparing me with them." Sri Ramakrishna, pleased with him at this, said: "What shall I do? Do you think it is I who speak such words? It is the Divine Mother who showed me like that and so I said. The Mother never shows me anything but truth and therefore I said so."

Sri Ramakrishna would not obtain release from the arguments of Narendranath by simply saying that "the Mother Divine had shown me or spoken through me." Doubting the truth of his visions, Narendranath would sometimes say in reply: "Who can say whether the Mother has shown you or you have seen so by your own mental imaginings? If I saw such things I would doubtless conclude that I was seeing so by my imagination. Western science and philosophy have proved beyond doubt that our senses deceive us many times. And add to that if the desire for a special vision is always awake in the mind, then, with this bias, our senses are sure to deceive us at every step. You love me and desire to see me great in every way, therefore such visions come to you."

Thus adducing proofs and illustrations by which Western physiology and science have by empirical investigation and research sought to prove the self-existent and intuitive truths of religion as erroneous, Narendranath would proceed to explain the matter to Sri Ramakrishna. Sri

Ramakrishna in his high spiritual moods would regard such childish endeavours on the part of Narendranath as indicative of his love and advocacy of truth and feel the more pleased with him.

But in his normal moods, the strong arguments of Narendranath would overpower his simple and childlike innocent mind and set up a commotion of doubt therein. Then perplexed he would think, "Really, Narendranath is devoted to truth heart and soul, and is not a man to utter a lie. In the minds of such persons so firmly devoted to truth, nothing but true thoughts arise—so the scriptures say. Are then my visions affected by error?" Again he would think: "But many times before I verified that the Divine Mother did not show me anything but truth and similarly I was assured again and again by Her own words; why then does the truth-loving Narendra say that my visions are fabrications of my imagination, and why does not his mind feel them as true?"

Cast into this doubt, he would ask the Divine Mother for a solution and hearing Her assuring words—"Do not listen to his (Narendranath's) words. Afterwards he (Narendranath) would admit the truth of your visions"—he would feel composed and his doubts laid to rest. As an illustration of this the incident of one day would bring the matter home to the reader's mind.

At that time the Brahmo movement was divided into two parties over the question the Cooch-Behar Marriage and as a result the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj had been established. Narendranath visiting Keshab Chandra now and again would also regularly join the Sunday worship of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and sing devotional songs. For some

reason Narendranath could not visit Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar for two or three weeks. Disappointed at daily expecting him he decided to go to Calcutta personally and meet Narendra there. He then reminded himself of the fact that the day being Sunday, Narendra might not be at home but out to meet some friends, and decided that as he was sure to be present at the evening worship of the Brahmo Samaj he would meet him there. Again he bethought himself that his unexpected presence might be the cause of displeasure to Brahmo devotees, but remembering that a similar appearance at Keshab's Samaj on his part, had given nothing but delight and that Vijoy, Shivanath and other leaders of the Sadharan Samaj had visited him at Dakshineswar many times and knew him well he decided to go. Thus the simple mind of Sri Ramakrishna came to a simple conclusion but forgot to take into account one fact. The fact that many in the Sadharan Samaj had left off visiting him at observing the change in the religious views of Keshab and Vijoy by their coming in contact with him, did not rise in his mind. And naturally so—for he had all his life felt the truth that as the human mind ascends higher and higher spiritual planes and advances in the path of spiritual progress, the previous religious views broadens and changes. He did not suspect that the truth-loving Brahmos always fighting so long for the establishment of truth would endeavour to set a limit to spiritual realisation and follow a different path.

It is the time of the evening worship and the tide of devotion welling up from the hearts of a hundred Brahmo devotees ascended high and high in unison with the Vedic utterances of "Satyam Jnanaam, Anantam (the Existence, Knowledge and

Infinite)" and winged in the holy feet of Sri Bhagavan. The worship and meditation ended and to increase the devotion and spiritual fervour of the devotees, the Acharya addressed words of spiritual instruction to the congregation from the pulpit. At such a time Sri Ramakrishna entered the *Mandir* (temple) and advanced towards the Acharya seated in the pulpit. Many among the congregation had seen him before and therefore the news of his arrival soon spread among the congregation and those who had not seen him before stood up on their legs or on the bench to have a look at him. Finding such disorder spreading among the assembly the Acharya desisted from his work and Narendranath sitting in the midst of the congregation understanding the reason of his sudden arrival there came and stood by the side of Sri Ramakrishna. But neither the Acharya nor any prominent member of the Samaj received him, and knowing him to be the cause of bringing a change in the religious views of Vijoy and others appeared reluctant to show him even the common courtesies.

Sri Ramakrishna without looking towards any direction came near the pulpit and fell into a trance. Then the eagerness of the people to see him in that condition increased the previous disorder; and finding it impossible to stop it and with a view to break up the congregation all the gas lights of the room were switched off. As a result there was a great commotion in the assemblage in trying to come outside from the darkness.

Finding nobody in the Samaj receiving Sri Ramakrishna with cordiality, Narendra felt much pained. He was hard put to take him out of the *Mandir*. Afterwards when he came to himself he brought him outside by the back door and taking him in

a carriage accompanied him to Dakshineswar. Narendra said: "Seeing him receive such a rebuff that day I cannot say how pained I felt. How much I censured him for his action! But utterly unmoved at the above incident he paid not the least heed to my words.

" Seeing him bestow not the least thought on himself in great love for me, I did not shrink from using hard words to him. I said: 'If it was true as is written in the Puranas, that the King Bharat by continuously thinking about a deer was reborn after death as a deer, then you should be careful and think about the result of your continuously dwelling in mind on me.' Sri Ramakrishna in his child-like simple mind would feel anxious at such words. He said, 'Yes it is true, but what shall I do then? I feel great longing to see you.' In great remorse he went to speak to the Divine Mother about it but returned smiling and said: 'I would not listen to your words. The Divine Mother said: You see the Narayana (the Lord) in him (Narendra) and therefore you love him. The day you won't see the Lord in him, you will not be able to look at him even.' Thus all my previous arguments he brushed aside by one word that day."

(To be continued.)

Such a unique personality like that of Sri Ramakrishna,—a synthesis of the utmost possibilities of Jnana, Yoga, Bhakti and Karma has never before appeared among mankind. He is a true disciple and follower of Sri Ramakrishna whose character is perfect and all-sided like his. The formation of such a perfect character is the ideal of this age, and everyone should strive for that.

—Swami Vivekananda.

A PEEP INTO SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S PERSONALITY.

IN more respects than one Sri Ramakrishna's personality was a marvel of the nineteenth century. Brought up in the full glare of modern civilisation we have certain established notions about what qualities constitute the notability of a man at the present day, and among these we may mention family greatness, personal grace, learning, and some conspicuous ability such as oratory or statesmanship or business capacity etc. These are enough now-a-days to entitle a man to be called a notable person, and if in addition to these he has some rare moral traits, so much the better. But this last item is not the *sine qua non* of greatness, and a man may be considered one of the greatest figures in spite of his sadly lacking in this respect. This is what the Western ideals of civilisation have taught us. Considered in this light Sri Ramakrishna would not seem to have much chance of comparing with the other celebrities of his time, for apparently he had none of the accomplishments above enumerated, except for the last one. He came, as we all know, of a poor Brahmin family in an out of the way village, had no personal comeliness to boast of, was innocent of education and never showed his ability as a writer or platform speaker, much less as a statesman. Still it cannot be doubted that he in his life-time did command a great amount of respect from the worthies of the day, such as Babu Keshab Chandra Sen, Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachudamani and Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar—to mention only two or three out of many—and what is stranger, is becoming more and more famous after his exit from the world, as days pass on. This silent yet wide-spread recognition which, notwithstanding his challenge to the idols of the nineteenth century, Sri Ramakrishna has succeeded in wresting from the modern world, is a fact which compels us to look deeper for

the secret springs of his power and influence.

What, then, was the secret of his greatness? The first answer that comes to our lips is that it was his wonderful character—its purity and simplicity—that exerted such charm over the people he came across. The power of the flesh we find so overwhelming, and the temptations of the senses so difficult to resist, that we cannot help expressing our genuine sense of wonder when we meet a personality like Sri Ramakrishna to whom the very idea of lust was as foreign as heat in ice or darkness in the sun, and who looked upon every feminine form as that of the Divine Mother whose favoured child he was. And so deep-rooted was this attitude in him that he would then and there feel like a child of five whenever a woman ever so suddenly presented herself before him. This was, as we have said, his characteristic attitude towards the female sex and this it was that enabled him to mix so freely with the numerous lady devotees that in his later years used to seek his holy company. Another most powerful attraction that we find swaying the hearts of men is that of money, and in this respect too Sri Ramakrishna was as invulnerable as an infant. In fact, he had taken such pains to root out the very idea of possession, and his success in it was so complete that he could not bear the touch of coins, and if any was without his knowledge secreted under his mattress, his feet automatically refused to touch the bed! To one who thus looked upon wealth as a bondage, as a barrier between the Divine Presence and the devotee, the temptation of riches was of no potency at all. Freed from these two bonds, sex and wealth, and having not the least hankering for fame, he moved like a child through the world, captivating the hearts of all who saw him.

Side by side with this purity and simpli-

city was noticeable in him an abundance of unselfish love for all—a love to which we seldom see a parallel on earth, which knew no limitations of time or place or circumstances, which was the spontaneous outflow of his wonderfully sympathetic heart,—which never cared for any return, which included the sinner as well as the saint, and which led him to offer his whole life at the altar of humanity. He had realised what a terrible suffering life on earth meant, and discovering the sovereign balm to it, passionately invited all to partake of that and be blessed. This love of his was all the more remarkable as it had its birth in a unique vision of immanent Divinity—which enabled him actually to see the Lord of the Universe in all beings, and so there was no chance of this love being shaken by any outward shortcomings of the person loved. His one burning desire was to rouse the dormant spirituality in all, so that they might feel strong enough to resist the evils of life. He was often seen to shed tears whenever he was afraid lest any one under his care might stray from the spiritual path through the importunities of his worldly-minded relatives, or for some other reason. Even in the grip of a fatal illness he could never turn away anybody seeking spiritual instruction, and he declared himself ready to undergo a long series of births if thereby he could be of any service to the least of mankind. This consideration for others is a trait of the higher types of men who, though their own sense of want has been satisfied for ever, are anxious to help other erring souls in the wilderness of the world. Like true shepherds they wish first to see their flocks safe before they would think their mission in life as ended. Of such stamp are the Buddhas and Christs.

Sri Ramakrishna's mastery in the spiritual domain was unique. In the course of twelve years of austere practices, of unprecedented devotion and earnestness, he explored the ins and outs of the spiritual life and not

stopping—as others might have done—at one kind of realisation he went on and on, searching for the Truth in all its phases, and when the course of his Sadhanas was finished, he came out of it with a fund of experience that beat all previous records. Not only did he realise the various Personal aspects of Godhead, but realised the heights of Advaita where all form is blotted out, and coming down to the ordinary plane, proclaimed anew the Vedic truth—एकं साहित्यं बहुधा वदन्ति—“Truth is one, sages call it by various names.” This all-sided realisation equipped him with the rare qualifications of a teacher of all mankind, and curiously enough, we find all sorts of aspirants coming to him and receiving enlightenment on their respective subjects. The utter absence of egoistic ideas in Sri Ramakrishna, coupled with this all round spiritual illumination, gave people of all sects an opportunity to mix with him freely and everyone considered him as a perfect man in his special branch of Sadhana. Having reached the bed-rock of religion—the unity of the Self—he had no need to identify himself with any particular aspect of it, to the exclusion of others, and was literally “all things to all men.” His teaching was : Be sincere and stick to your own form of worship, and you are sure to reach the Goal.” He instructed each disciple according to his bent of mind, and patiently watched their growth along their lines. This ministration to the disciples often entailed a great hardship on him, but like the mother tending her children he would allow them full liberty and gladly bear all their boyish pranks, for they were seekers after God, and as such claimed his tenderest attention. He ungrudgingly bore their abuses even at times, and directed them towards their Goal, without minding personal indignities, knowing in his heart of hearts that sooner or later they were bound to come round. And his expectations never failed.

Sri Ramakrishna's life marked the unquestionable triumph of spirit over matter,

of the soul over the body, of moral force over intellectual or physical endowments. Those who had the good fortune to witness the Master's Samadhi knew how radiant and magnetic in influence his countenance at that time was! No mere physical beauty could stand by it. It solaced as it ennobled the beholders, translating them unconsciously to altogether new heights of experience, and the memory of that scene has been abiding with them. Intellectually, too, he was a prodigy, for his mind was keen enough to understand every shade of thought, and though devoid of any academical training it had come to the highest generalisations by ways known only to itself. His manner of expression also was unique. Nobody could discuss such abstruse topics with such lucidity and forcefulness, and his accurate observation of the everyday incidents of life, combined with his superabundant sense of humour, always had a telling effect on his hearers, sometimes moving them to tears, at other times creating side-splitting laughter, sometimes making them feel they were in the company of a chum, and sometimes striking them with awe through a sense of the tremendous difference between his level and theirs. He was a fascinating singer also, and would carry his audience into transports through his rapturous absorption into the meaning of the devotional song he was rendering. He had a perfect eye for beauty, and there was nothing inartistic in or about him. He would instantaneously detect any the least impropriety in manner, dress, or talk, and sometimes such aberrations would give a blow to his finely attuned nerves.

Living, as he did, in a spiritual level altogether removed from the ordinary standpoint, his actions and utterances at times looked like those of a maniac, and many who saw him only once or twice, actually took him to be one. But upon closer scrutiny these departures from normal life were found to be the outcome not of an undeveloped, but

on the contrary, a super-developed mind. It was quite in the fitness of things that he refused to take things at our valuation. For instance, when everyone considered the boy Narendra—the future Swami Vivekananda—as a scape-grace atheist, Sri Ramakrishna always persisted in predicting his future greatness. Again when he was strongly advised to give up Babu Girish Chandra Ghosh for using strong language, he on the contrary ordered for a carriage to go and see the dramatist! When the priest of the Kalighat temples, exasperated by Sri Ramakrishna's failure to explain (while in a state of ecstasy) the reason of his influence over the rich Mathur Babu, kicked him in anger, the latter, out of consideration for the man's safety, bound himself down by an oath never to disclose the incident to Mathur Babu—for it would surely have endangered the offender's life. His attitude towards the street-walkers may also be cited in point. But the very fact that his super-conscious realisations were highly moral and conducive to the welfare of humanity, and always came true, as also his unimpeachable character, showed that he had tapped other sources of knowledge than were accessible to ordinary men, and that he was not a lunatic but a superman, a Seer, to whom Nature had revealed her secrets and who was born to show mankind the way to peace and blessedness.

About this extraordinary status of his Sri Ramakrishna himself was at first doubtful, and tested in various ways whether the supernatural knowledge that had dawned upon him was genuine and corroborated by the scriptures or not. But several great scholars, of their own accord, declared his realisations to be on a par with those of the greatest world-movers and Incarnations, and the matter was so indisputably proved that when, in later life, some of his devotees would come forward with the statement that he was an Avatar, he would dismiss the subject by remarking, "Vastly learned men, some versed in all the six, some in five or four systems of Indian

Philosophy, have repeatedly pronounced this body (meaning himself) an Incarnation, and now comes a chemist or a theatre-manager to take up that thread-bare subject! What do these know of an Avatar?" To him the final test of truth was supersensuous realisation, and by this standard he had known and afterwards declared, "He who was born as Rama and as Krishna has now incarnated Himself in this body (showing himself)." To us it seems that this kind of testimony of an inspired soul, in the light of his general character, is the best means to judge personalities like Sri Ramakrishna. But it is immaterial whether one takes him for an Incarnation or simply a perfected man. We should study his life and character with an unbiased mind and we are all at liberty to form our own estimate. But his purity and "God-intoxicated" life, far, far above the ordinary level, his selfless love and service to his fellow-beings, his preaching of the harmony of religions and passionate exhortation to renounce ideas of sex and possession, his superhuman knowledge and absence of the ego—these and a thousand other qualities of head and heart will proclaim him to be one of the rarest gems the world has produced, and one whom all mankind should look up to for inspiration and guidance. The proof of religion is the life of such personages, and they serve as the messengers between man and God. Nay, they are God Himself in the vesture of flesh,—through them percolate Divine Knowledge and Love for the edification of the world. One with the Sat-Chit-Ananda, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, they are the living embodiment of Truth, and one touch, one glance of theirs dispels man's beginningless ignorance and misery. They cannot be said to be *doing good* to the world merely, their very breath imparts a fresh pulsation of life and energy to it; they simply *live*, and the world feels a change for the better. They are not bound by conditions of time or place. They are

for all ages and climes. Universal good is the result of their advent on earth—and the welfare of the country they consecrate by their birth follows as a matter of course. That India has produced a man like Ramakrishna Paramahansa is a proof that she, the motherland of spirituality, is living, and her natural function of saint-production is at work now as it was in ancient times. This was one of the grandest discoveries of the Swami Vivekananda who epitomised his estimate of his Divine Master in the following pregnant words: "He was the embodiment of all the past religious thought of India. His life alone made me understand what the Shastras really meant, and the whole plan and scope of the old Shastras.....What the whole Hindu race has thought in ages, he *lived* in one life. His life is the living commentary to the Vedas of all the nations." Sri Ramakrishna has inaugurated a new life-current into the world, and it has reached the distant shores beyond the seas, slowly transforming them, with the power of the spirit over matter, and already the first murmurs of this tidal wave are being heard. The world will be ennobled, mankind will be uplifted, and the glory of bringing about this happy regeneration will belong to India. Those who can read the signs of the times feel this. Upon every Indian, man or woman, rests an onerous task,—that of assimilating Sri Ramakrishna's teachings and sowing them broadcast into the world—developing an all-round character like his and converting others by its influence. There is no time to lose. The world is waiting for this, "Arise! Awake! and stop not till the Goal is reached!"

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA



SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE HIGHER RELIGIOUS SYNTHESIS.*

THIE subject I have chosen for to-night's address is Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and the "Higher Religious Synthesis" and my observations will be based entirely upon such of the teachings and sayings of the great man as are available.

But it is well known that the materials at the disposal of a student who wants to study critically the teachings of the Paramahansa are scanty indeed and especially so to those who are ignorant of Bengali. Like all the great men of our country he seems to have sown broadcast the spiritual truths that revealed themselves to him in his वान्यमति (self-realisation) and taken little care to have them codified or systematised, much less to have them committed to writing; but thanks to the devotion of a few Bhaktas, we have these two books rendered available, i. e., The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna according to 'M' and his "Sayings."

Prose as a medium of literary expression is of comparatively recent origin in our country and a method of expressing profound ideas in a simple and easily rememberable manner was a question of necessity with our ancestors who lived in days prior to the introduction of printing, and this national tendency is still seen at its best in the sayings of persons untouched by the Western civilisation. Further, those who know a subject thoroughly well find that at first hand, have got a knack of putting things in an abnormally easy form which is sublime in its simplicity. Both these elements of terseness and simplicity are found united in Sri Ramakrishna. Hence the tiny volume containing his sayings is crammed with statements each of which can be expanded into pages, just as the tiny fruit of a banyan tree is crammed with seeds each of which is capable of growing in good time into a huge tree capable of sheltering even big armies in its shadow.

There is no department of spiritual activity

which is not touched upon in this book (Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna) and nothing touched upon that has not been further illuminated. I take, however, for study to-night only one string of truths, those that have been brought under the significant heading of the "Harmony of Religions."

With each new mind, says Emerson, a new secret of nature transpires and it is my humble opinion that this truth, that all religions are equally true and that any one properly followed is as efficacious a medicine of the soul as any other, and that therefore there need be no quarrel among the religions of the world, which has been taught by Ramakrishna is an advance upon the teachings of his predecessors.

It is a common psychological fact that when a person is obsessed by a great thought and wants to express it so as to be understood by all, he uses different similes and hammers it into the mind of his hearers in all possible ways. The illustrious author of Sri Lalita Trisatee (श्री ललिता त्रिसारी) who wants to express the idea that the great Mother is the very essence of the mystic syllable श्री, the gifted poet Shelley who is in raptures on listening to the divine melody of his lark whose form he sees not, the great philosopher-poet Thayumanavar who after experiencing the inexpressible bliss of God-realisation, tries to exhaust the vocabulary of sweet things in attempting to give us an idea of the bliss he experiences, are some instances which prove the truth of my statement. Similarly Sri Ramakrishna also harps upon this great theme of harmony of all religions and impresses that upon us by no less than ten different examples and similes as may be seen from his "Sayings."

It is interesting to note that Vivekananda lays special emphasis upon this lesson which he learnt from his Guru. In his well-known lecture on "My Master," he says that he learnt two truths from his teacher, first, that religion is not mere talk or formal observances but realisation, and the second, that all religions are equally true and effective as means of salvation.

* An address delivered at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore on the 80th Anniversary of the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa by Mr. S. K. Yegnanarayana Aiyar, M. A., Principal, Salem College

It would be a very fascinating subject indeed for the student of evolution of religious thought to trace the attempts that have been made from time to time to make religion less and less exclusive : how, for example, people realised that not only by the proper performance of certain rites enjoined upon them by a particular portion of the Vedas we get salvation, but by other methods also, by Yoga, by Bhakti and above all by Jnana ; how later on, when Islam came to stay in the land, some great ones like Nanak and Kabir saw that ultimately both Hinduism and Mahomedanism taught the same truths and hence preached union, peace and good-will among the followers of both and how later on Sri Ramakrishna went one step further and taught that all religions are true because he knew it to be a fact by direct personal experience. This historical development of the doctrine of " Harmony of Religions " I leave to be done by abler hands. My task to-night is much simpler.

The great American Pragmatic philosopher William James said of philosophical truth that existential judgment or pronouncing an opinion upon it regarding its origin, development or its indebtedness to others does not estop us from forming another estimate about it, what he calls the spiritual judgment and suggests three tests for arriving at such an estimate, namely, immediate luminousness, philosophical reasonableness and moral helpfulness.

That this doctrine of Harmony of Religions strikes us at first sight as good and convincing and that it does not clash with any well-recognised body of truths, goes without saying. It will be a very dull world indeed if all of us are to think alike in matters religious. On the other hand, if each religion is to cry out that the truth is its own monopoly and belongs to none else, that salvation is to be got only if persons go through this gate and through none else, it leads to bad feeling among people who are intended by our Divine Father to live as brothers upon this beautiful earth of His. Therefore the best way to fulfil His purpose is to see the underlying unity in all these various paths which ultimately lead on to Him. In these days when historical criticism has undermined the old-world notions of exclusive Recla-

tions, it would be absurd for any sect or religion to claim monopoly of spiritual truth.

But more important than these is the practical value of this truth of the Harmony of all Religions. How far is this useful to us as human beings that happen to inhabit this " troubrous little planet of ours " at this juncture in the history of our race and more especially, how far is this useful to us, Indians of the present day ? It is this aspect of the question that I should like to emphasise upon to-night.

To any student who has studied the world problems of to-day the most striking post-war social change would appear to be the great interest that man has begun to evince in matters religious. When the stream of life runs smooth, men easily fall victims to a hedonistic philosophy, but when by some cause the scales fall off their eyes, they are confronted with the eternal verities, and the old, old questions force themselves upon them with redoubled vigour and demand solution. " Whence ? Whither ? Wherefore ? " — all these are questions that engage the serious attention of the people. The recent war has been such an eye-opener. It has not merely revolutionised the European politics and economics, but it has brought about a silent though none the less effective revolution in European religion. The men who march forward to certain death at cannon's mouth want better consolation than mere sects or creeds can offer and they are not satisfied with superficialities but want real truths to be taught to them by persons who know them at first hand and have realised them in their own lives.

It is an object-lesson for persons of narrow views to see the pious Catholic, the bigoted Calvinist, the gentle Hindu and the Muslim all cheerfully marching together to death, each thinking of his God, who is the God of all and each singing his own divine song which he sees is as good as another's to brace him up to his task. The Christian soldier dying in the battle-field of Flanders will never for a moment believe that his Hindu brother lying by his side and thinking in his last moments of his sacred Ganga and the mighty Himalayas, his Great Shiva and all-pervading Narayana is doomed to eternal perdition simply because he does not believe in Christ. Nor

would the pious Hindu regard his Christian or Mahomedan brother, all starting with him on the long journey from which there will be no return, as having no possibility of getting salvation. They all instinctively realise the grand truth that all religions are equally true and such world-cataclysms as the recent war offer unparalleled facilities for verifying this truth.

Neither the soldier who survives bombs and machine guns and returns home maimed or whole, nor the civilian who has been staying at home but following the march of events, can ever be forced back to the old narrow grooves and exclusive creeds and this mighty truth of Harmony of all Religions comes to them like refreshing showers in summer and cements further the bond of friendship formed in the face of common danger.

And what about the much-talked-of League of Nations, which is an approach to the realisation of the dream of the poet who sang of the Parliament of man and Federation of the world? Because the organisation has no spiritual basis, the only basis of union being one of common worldly interests and common opportunities of exploitation, it is lacking in the real bond of union. If all the members of the League who follow one or other of the great religions of the world realise in full the potency and significance of the doctrine or truth of the Harmony of all Religions, this union which has been brought about by selfish motives and temporal considerations, would develop itself into a true League of nations. It is religion and God's words misinterpreted that have kept mankind apart hitherto and it is the same religion and true word of God that must bring us all together.

In this connection, it may not be out of place if I refer to the view of one of the most advanced thinkers of the West at the present time. Mr. H. G. Wells writes in his famous "Outlines of History" that the future world-state which is his ideal will be based upon a common world-religion very much simplified, universalised and better understood. How shall we bring about this consummation of a world-religion which according to the author will be neither Christianity nor Mahomedanism, nor Buddhism, but religion itself,

pure and undefiled? Do you think we can bring about that consummation by allowing each religion to proclaim, "Come to me, I alone know the truth; all others are impostors," and thus encourage a sort of competition in matters spiritual? Shall we not, on the other hand, solve the problem on well-recognised principles of co-operation allowing each religion to have its own way, being assured that the gain of one is the gain of all? How can we have this attitude of the mind unless we imbibe fully the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and realise the grand truth,—I say, realise and not merely to subscribe to the truth in an academic manner,—that all religions are equally true, they being different paths leading to the same goal? So if the world at the present time is athirst for one truth more than another, if there be one truth more than another which will heal the wounds of the sore-afflicted mankind and help them to knit themselves closer in bonds of affection and brotherhood, it is this grand truth of the Harmony of Religions taught by this so-called illiterate Brahmin priest of Dakshineswar.

If the world at large need this truth to save itself, what about us in India? Our motherland has aptly been termed an epitome of the world and this is true of her religions even more than her physical features or climatic conditions, her flora and fauna or her ethnic, linguistic and cultural varieties. The vision of a united India is dawning upon us all, Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians and Parsees. What chance is there, I ask you in all earnestness, of the vision being realised and the feeling of brotherhood firmly established on a stable foundation if the Hindu in his heart of hearts were to believe that his patriotic Muslim brother who shares with him all the burdens and anxieties incidental to the arduous task of national regeneration and uplift is after all a *Mlechchha* a *Veda Bahya*, one not entitled to salvation till at least he is born as a Brahmin after a long chain of lives? How unstable the foundation of the Indian nationalism will be if the Indian Christians were to sincerely believe that all of us, his idolatrous brothers, are doomed for ever to dwell in purgatory, if not already destined for the hotter regions below, because we do not place faith in the great Jesus as the only saviour of mankind to the extent he does!

Unfortunately or fortunately for us, we cannot assign to religion a secondary place in the scheme of our life and unite together merely for temporal purposes as the Westerner does and can. We are made of a different stuff. Whether for good or evil, religion has always remained with us as the first and last concern of life. The separation between civilisation or culture and religion which was almost complete in the West and which many a profound thinker of the West* deplored as tending to the weakening of both, has scarcely been possible in this country. Our finest pieces of architecture and sculpture are in our temples and our best poet-musicians have been great saints like Thyagaiyur. Like the blue sky above, below and around us, religion has ever been our sustaining element. It is almost impossible for us Indians to forget our religion, much less so for political and other worldly purposes. That being our national temperament, a United India is an impossibility unless it has a broader basis than mere political expediency.

Then it might be proposed as an alternative, why not give up all points of difference and all of us observe that religion which contains the common points of all? This solution is not as easy as it might at first appear. Who is to judge which are essential and which are non-essential in particular religions and what after all will be left if all these differences be dropped? Some abstractions will be left which will perhaps be acceptable to the philosopher in his study, but the man in the street will no more care to have that lifeless, formless religion as the stay of his soul than he would care to have as his food a few molecules of Nitrogen, Oxygen and other elements that constitute the basis of all human food. The only way therefore to provide us all, the followers of different religions, that form the population of this country, with a common platform is to follow the teachings of this Dakshineswar sage and really and sincerely feel and believe that all religions are true and every one, rightly observed, leads us on to ~~Him~~, the goal of all.

It was a fancy of mine in my younger days to look upon the Brahmo Samaj and other movements that from a rationalistic point of view arrive at some common basis of all religions, as

those which were looking for the meeting point of all petals in a lotus bud at its bottom, whereas Ramakrishna who taught us the Harmony of Religions was compared by me to one who sought for the meeting point of the lotus petals at the top of the bud. By the former view one sees the meeting point no doubt but he misses the beauty of the petals that branch gracefully on all sides to meet again at the top; whereas the one who looked at the higher point did not miss the unity but had the further advantage of not losing sight of the petals. It is this that I mean by the higher Synthesis of Religion as contrasted with the lower Analysis of Religion and it is my sincere conviction that this great truth alone will bring about the peace of the world and the prosperity of mankind.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S NATIVITY. HYMN.

श्रीरामकृष्णविर्भावतिष्ठै
स्तवाध्यपद्मं।

किञ्चोलास्तीर्थ्या यः सखिलविपुलोच्छासलहरी-
ज्ञानानकव्यादान् कपिकुलवन्तं नीलजलधेः ।
सुरेहो वैदेशीप्रणायगग्नेन्दुर्वृपमग्निः
स रामः “श्रीरामः” परमशरणोऽर्थं भुवि सतां॥१॥

मुकुन्दः कालिन्दीकलकलितकूले पुलकिते
पुरा मञ्जी कुञ्जे वज्रयुर्तवृन्दैरभसतः ।
स्वयं रेमे साक्षान्मदनमदनो यः सुखमधी
मधुध्वंसी वंशीधरकरकदम्बाग्नितततुः ॥२॥

कल्पो लीलालोलो गविताविमलालो हरिरिति
गदन् यो हेमाङ्गो निजमधुरिमास्तादनपरः ।
कृपासिन्धुर्वन्धुर्विरचितसंकीर्तनपिता
शचीसूनुः सोऽयं “रघुयुपति”-श्रेति सुमतं ॥३॥

रायड्के लङ्केण्यं द्रुणगुणनिनादैभुवि पुरा
सुरल्याः पस्पन्दे व्रजयुवतिचेतांसि सुरण्यैः ।
धरित्रीं तत्रे यो मधुरहरिसंकीर्तनरण्यैः
“कथापीयुपै”-र्नः प्रजर्यनि मृतिं सोऽय कृपयाऽधा

*Eucken's collected Essays.

इतायां सीतायामधिनातविमोहः समजनि
लुब्धाप द्वौरयां यम्भिरमधुरराष्ट्रविरहतः ।
प्रापि न्यासी कान्तां स्मरन्निह च अकन्तं नियतं
महो द्वौर्योपरतरमणीसंगकणिकः ॥५॥

स्वयं गुसोऽव्यय प्रभवति भुवां योऽद्भुतगुणः
पुमान् श्रीमान् यक्तया युगगतिविज्ञाने युगगुरुः ।
मकुर्वाणोऽव्येको निभूतनिषयस्थः प्रकुरुते
स्वर्णीर्थः सर्वत्र प्रभुरवतु वः सोऽमितकृपः ॥६॥

इति श्रीमद्भिक्षश्रीरामकृष्णातस्त्र श्रीविवेकानन्द-
भगवत्पादकिरण श्रीराधारमण्यनन्दिसरस्व-
तीषिद्याभूषणन विरचितमेतत् ।

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS MESSAGE.

AN almost illiterate man, yet exercising the most wonderful influence on brilliant graduates of the university, a man of matchless moral character worshipping all woman-kind including his own wife as the manifestation of the divine Mother and dreading money and possession as poison, a devotee constantly meditating on God with an intense love and devotion and losing, on that account, the consciousness of the external world and the body many times during the day, a teacher pouring forth a continuous stream of instructions in the simplest language and parables containing the highest divine wisdom, a man of wonderful catholicity mixing with men of various creeds sometimes as contradictory as light and darkness and accepting all of them as divine dispensations equally authoritative and binding—

Such is the imperfect picture of the wonderful personality who lived at the village of Dakshineswar near Calcutta at the end of the nineteenth century, which we gather from his still living intimate disciples and admirers and from the rich literature regarding

his life and teachings. Keshub Chandra Sen, the great Brahmo preacher, was, we are reliably informed, profoundly influenced by this wonderful personality and it is known to everybody how the later development of the Brahmo religion known as the New Dispensation was due mainly to this influence. The whole world also noticed the manifestation of the wonderful power of this personality in Chicago in 1893 through his illustrious disciple, the great Swami Vivekananda. Let us study, in brief, the principal messages which Sri Ramakrishna, the greatest Incarnation of God in the nineteenth century as he has been called by many, came to deliver to the world,

It appears to us that we can derive two most important lessons from his life and teachings. The first is that religion does not consist in theorising, in mere intellectual assent to certain doctrines however profound, nor in the mere scrupulous performance of certain ceremonials however salutary and instructive they may be in themselves, neither in controversial proficiency, nor in the profession of secret occult wisdom, nor in a particular manner of eating and drinking. It really is in realisation in one's heart of the living God. That religion is a reality, everybody was convinced whoever chanced to meet this unique personality. He saw God, talked with God, lived always in that Holy Presence and everyone near him felt with what intense feeling of devotion he was constantly consumed and what transcendental insight he gained thereby. Everyone knows how he answered the challenge of Swami Vivekananda whether he had seen God. He said that not only he saw God himself, but could show Him to Swamiji. This wonderful influence of religion showed itself in a small group of educated young men headed by Swamiji, who gave up all worldly prospects and advantages in order to realise religion and see God face to face. By the help of the Master and his disciples, a large number of

men and women throughout the world have learned even in this materialistic age to consider religion a reality. They have learnt that the doctrines and dogmas and rites and ceremonies and temples and all other things are only helpful as means to the ultimate realisation of God, but not in themselves. They have learnt that in whatever field one may work, he must have living religion as the basis of all his activities.

The other great message to which we have referred is that all religions are true ; they are, as it were, so many paths to reach the same goal. Sri Ramakrishna practised the precepts of many of the existing divisions of the Hindu religion, such as Shakta and Vaishnava, to the letter. He also practised the Mohammedan and Christian religions, and ultimately came to the conclusion that they are all equally true. We cannot understand the true import of this message, unless we study the condition of the present-day religious world a little.

In the most ancient Rig-Veda Samhita we find the unique utterance—

"Truth is only one—the sages call it by various names."

This wonderful ancient idea of not only toleration, but acceptance of all the religions has mainly guided India and its religious consciousness and for this reason throughout its whole history we find very little fight between different sects, and compared to other countries the different religionists here have lived most amicably side by side. But the weak human nature even asserted itself here in this land of peace and we hear of the fight between the Shaivas, Shaktas and Vaishnavas. In philosophy also each school has tried to establish its supremacy over all others. The Lord Sri Krishna tried once to reconcile these warring sects by re-asserting the ancient truth by saying—

"Whoever approaches Me in whatever way, I also reveal Myself to him through that path."

But soon the message was forgotten and the different commentators of this Divine Song itself are seen to interpret the message each his own way and regarding other interpretations as not true. If we study the present religious movements also, we find that their founders, who were great spiritual men, had each emphasised a particular path ; and though we may infer they were not themselves unappreciative of the efficacy of other paths, still by the method of their teaching and preaching, their disciples soon became as narrow as ever and tried to fight the other contemporaneous sects. It is the speciality of the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, that it is so simple that even a boy can understand it easily and in this teaching the *sine qua non* of a religious life has been repeatedly said to be the aspirant's intense hankering for the truth and all paths have been mentioned as equally efficacious according to different temperaments. Whether you believe in an impersonal or a personal God, whether you believe in Vishnu or Shakti or Mahomed or Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna's teachings equally apply to you. Not only that, but he had a message even for an atheist. We hear that to an atheist he recommended prayer in the following form :—"O God ! I do not know if Thou existest or not. If Thou art, reveal Thyself to me." In brief, he wanted all men to be perfectly sincere and said that this sincerity alone could help men to know the perfect truth ultimately.

Of course, there is the danger here also of setting up the personality of Sri Ramakrishna and forgetting his wonderful teachings about the equal efficacy of all religions and to insist on the worship of his person as the only means of salvation. We admit the possibility of this danger, but we will ask the reader to forget the personality for the present and fix his attention on the wonderful, catholic teachings and try each one to grow into a perfect religious man by trying to realise the highest truth in his own way and allow his neighbour

also to follow the path he has chosen, however different it may seem from his own path. In this way, may we not fervently hope that within a measurable distance of time, the cultured and liberal section of every religious sect will form a holy brotherhood and join hands to fight the materialistic tendency of the age and its consequent corruption !

We cannot look into the distant future, but if in this world such a state of spirituality, brotherhood, love and peace only continue for a considerable period, shall we not be justified in considering that period as *Satya-Yuga* and shall we not gratefully acknowledge the services of that wonderful man, who by his unique teachings, nay, more by his unique life, made such a transformation of society possible for some time at least ?

SWAMI SUDDHANANDA.

THE EIGHTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

Belur Math.

The 86th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on Sunday, the 13th March, at the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, the headquarters of the Mission, with great enthusiasm and devotion as befitting the occasion. The Math premises assumed a joyous appearance on this great national day when many thousands of people assembled to pay their homage to the great Prophet whose divine life and teachings have infused a new spirit into the life of the nation. Since early morning people began to pour in from steamers, country-boats, trains etc. Under a huge canopy a life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was placed for public worship on an altar tastefully decorated with flowers, garlands and evergreens. The various *Kirtan* parties singing the glory of the Lord roused love and devotion in the hearts of the devotees and created a spiritual atmosphere in which they forgot the cares and anxieties of life.

Thousands of people sat down, without any distinctions of caste or creed, to partake of the holy *prasada*, which was distributed during the whole day. Volunteers under the guidance of the monastic members worked hard for the distribution of *prasada* and the supplying of water to drink, and by their zeal and devotion to service helped to make the function a grand success. The festival terminated in the evening and people returned to their homes carrying with them the happy and ennobling impressions of this memorable day.

Benares.

The eighty-sixth birthday ceremony of Bhagavan Sri Sri Ramakrishna Deva was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares, on 13th March, 1921 with great *ekar* and solemnity. The occasion was graced by the presence of three dignitaries of the Ramakrishna Mission, their Holinesses Swami Brahmananda, Swami Turiyananda and Swami Saradananda. The open hall of the Advaita Ashrama was decorated with flowers, wreaths, bunting and ever-greens. A picture of Paramahansa Deva was placed in the middle profusely garlanded. The Puja ceremony was attended with recitals from the Vedas and after it was over, the assembled Bhaktas, both lay and monastic, gave offerings. Then they began *Bhajan* and *Kirtan* which lasted for about two hours.

One notable feature of this year's celebration was the *Samasti Bhaktihra* (feeding of all the Sannyasins of principal sects of Benares). The feeding began at about 1 p.m. and it was a sight to see about 250 Sadhus assembled on the memorable day enhancing the solemnity of the occasion. The monastic members of the R.K. Mission were all attention to the distinguished guests. The Sadhus were at first garlanded and their forehead besmeared with sandal paste. They then partook of the sumptuous dinner amidst chanting from the scriptures. A meeting was held at about 4 p.m. in the Advaita Ashrama compound presided over by Srimat Swami Saradanandaji. It was largely attended, with a fair sprinkling of ladies. The proceedings commenced with a song sung in chorus. Prof. P. K. Telang was invited to give an address and at the request of the president he delivered a felicitous

speech on Sri Ramakrishna Deva and his teachings, a summary of which is given below :—

He began saying that he did not come prepared to give an address on Ramakrishna Paramahamsa Deva that evening as he did not give deep study to the subject so as to be able to do justice to it. Secondly in an assembly-like it where he saw around him many followers and disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, it would not be possible for him to give a new light on the subject. The audience, he thought, knew more about that great personality than the speaker. The speaker wished to confine himself to one or two points of the life of Sri Ramakrishna Deva and to the movement that he had started. He would rather narrate his own personal reflections on the life of that magnetic personality.

Continuing the speaker said : In a world so full of doublings and contradictions, the question naturally arises in the thoughtful whether there is anything worthy to be followed after. The modern world presents a large problem full of apparent anomalies and contradictions. Is there anything by which this problem could be tackled and made understandable ? Hinduism says that there is one way to get out of it. One reads in the Vivekachudamani : There is no fear, no danger and no harm from anybody. This truth has been embodied in the dictum "Tattvamasi" or "Thou art That." One further learns that by knowing the truth one can get out of this misery and trouble of the world. But this point had been explained from so many standpoints and in so many ways that the explanation had been entangled hopelessly in the meshes. The Sruti very often contradicts itself. It has been the great quest of religion to find that bedrock on which it can stand. One often tries to get a standpoint from which he can survey the whole world. Deep as our scholarship advances, humanity gives different answers to all these riddles. The question arises whether books can be taken as final proof and authority in this matter. But even there are contradictions in the statements of books. What is called higher criticism has taken away a great deal of value from the life of the great persons of the past. Under all these difficulties how can a man be sure as to the correctness of his position ? The evidence which no philosophy can break is that of human experience.

The value of the life of Ramakrishna is that he stands as the living witness of the great truths. The Vedanta stands justified by being practised by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. To me the greatest value of the life of Ramakrishna is that he is the latest—though I hope not the last—of a series of seers whose very life is the exposition of the truths of the Vedanta. It is not so much what he taught, but the life that he led that explained the Vedanta. Mere arguments can only satisfy the mind or intellect. By arguments you cannot prove the existence of God. Argument only makes it to be a probability. But to a seer the truth that he preaches is part of his life, his own realisation. That seer is a Rishi. There is a gulf of difference between a *Tatpurdurshi* and a *Pandit*. As regards the former, the truth becomes the law of his life. To me, I think, it is not the sayings of Ramakrishna that matter much, but the atmosphere which he created by his own life that counts most. He expressed truths in the familiar examples of everyday occurrence. He could find such easy means of expression, because he realised those truths in his own life. The Pandits, in order to make these truths intelligible to us, make use of such subtle things as *Ghatakasa*, *Patakasa*, and use the simile of *Rajju* (rope) and *Sarpa* (snake). But instead of making it clear they make it more complicated. We in this age do not understand *Ghatakasa* and *Patakasa*; many of us who live in towns, perhaps have never seen a snake and it would be mere foolishness to mistake a rope for snake. These metaphors and similes might be interesting in those old days, but certainly they cannot do us any good now. Ramakrishna saw truths revealed to him, so he could give an easy expression to them in trifling incidents of everyday life. He was the latest of a long list of teachers who taught by giving examples from the everyday incidents of our life.

Continuing the speaker said that greater than his teaching was the way in which he brought illumination to other people's heart. He could easily make others understand what he realised in his own life. In the Upanishads we hear that the Guru extinguished all other desires in the mind of the disciples except one, and that was a desire to be like his Guru in his own life. To perpetuate the work of the Guru was the only desire of his disciple. This was also the characteristic of Rama-

krishna. We see this explained in the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. In all his speeches he said that he was only preaching the divine message of his Guru.

The speaker continuing said: "The Vedanta cannot be explained from books but by the life of man. All these hospitals and charitable institutions lying around us are the greatest monuments of the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and from time to time we should help them by our mite if we cannot actually join these institutions. Vedanta is the greatest truth to learn, Vedanta is the foundation principle of our activity. It is not the turning away from life, as so many of us suppose. It declares emphatically *Tivo Brahmaru Niparah*. In these days of democracy Vedanta should exert the greatest influence upon our life. Because Vedanta contains the finest exposition of democracy. For what is the reason for believing that every man is as good as another, which is the pivot of modern democracy? The Vedanta says that in every man lies God—in fact every creature—sentient or insentient—is God Himself. The war-cry of democracy is equality. It is the order of the day. Vedanta boasts of no shibboleth or slogan. The teaching of Vedanta is not a war-cry. It is a calm and philosophic exposition of the basis of our everyday life. We should therefore unfurl the banner of Vedanta and carry its teaching—which we have long forgotten—to the wearied world reeking under the hammer-blow of uninspired materialism. Therefore the life of such a man as Ramakrishna Paramahansa who is the living example of the Vedanta truths is invaluable to guide us in our everyday life.

Swami Madhavananda and Swami Yotiswarananda next addressed the meeting in English. They were followed by Swami Jotirnayananda who spoke in Hindi. Swami Suddhananda was the next speaker who in a few well-chosen words dealt with the chief characteristics of Paramahansa Deva. The President brought the proceedings to a close by a fine speech in Bengali which was heard with rapt attention. The meeting separated at about 7 p. m. Then music brought to a finish the 86th birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna Deva at the Benares Advaita Ashrama.

Madras.

The 86th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri

Ramakrishna was celebrated with great *elat* and zeal, at Madras on Sunday, the 13th March. From early morning devotees began to pour in at the Math premises. A beautiful large-sized photo of the Bhagavan beautifully decorated with ferns, flowers and garlands was installed in the spacious hall of the Math. There were many Sankirtan parties present on that day. From 8 a. m. till noon the Lord's glory was sung with great ecstasy. At noon the Bhajana terminated and the worship of the Lord took a new shape, that of feeding the poor Narayanas. About 4000 were fed sumptuously. At about 3 p. m. one of the devotees gave a Harikatha recital which was very much appreciated by the public. After this a public meeting was held which was largely attended. M. R. Ry. S. Varadachariar B. A., B. L. gave a lucid discourse with Prof. Sundaram Iyer M. A. in the chair. The President spoke fervently about the greatness of India and of Sri Ramakrishna saying that at a critical time when India and the world needed Him most, He came to fulfil His words in the Gita.

At the request of the Math members Mr. Aladi Krishnaswami Iyer, High Court Vakil, thanked the Bhagavata, the Lecturer and the President.

With Aratrikam and the usual distribution of Prasada the functions of the day terminated.

Bangalore City.

The Eighty-sixth Birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated with the usual devotion and ardour at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore City, on Friday the 11th and Saturday the 13th March. The former, the *tithi puja* day was observed by the worship of Sri Ramakrishna all through the day, by *Bhajanam* in the evening and the customary children's treat. The observances of the latter day commenced with the arrival of *Bhajana* parties from the Cantonment and the City at about noon. Next came the feeding of the poor in Tumkur Thimmaiya's Chatram at Gavipur (just behind the Ashrama) which was over at about 5 p. m. At about 3 p. m. Sri Jayaramachar began a *kalakshepam*, specially prepared for the occasion, on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and kept the audience spell-bound till 6 p. m. It is to be acknowledged that Sri Jayaramachar contributed largely to the success of

both the celebrations this year by his original compositions.

The evening's functions commenced immediately after, with a thoughtful lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna by Rao Saheb H. Chennaiya, Retired Sub Judge of Coorg. Next followed Prof. S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer, M. A., Principal of the Salem College, who read an erudite paper on "Ramakrishna and the Higher Religious Synthesis" (published elsewhere). The theme of his paper was that Sri Ramakrishna stood for a high order of religious synthesis (rather than any low analysis) pointing out as indeed he did in actual practice that all religions have only one goal in view and the world-religion talked of in several quarters could easily be rendered possible on this basis.

At the desire of Swami Nirmalanandaji, the President of the local branch, Mr. M. A. Narayana Iyengar thanked the *Bhagavata* and the lecturers and in particular Mr. S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer who had come all the way from Salem for the occasion. The proceedings terminated at about 8 p. m. with *aratrikam* and distribution of *prasada*.

Kim, Guzerat.

The 86th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated under the auspices of the Sri Guzerat Arghyashala, Kim Station.

In the morning *Puja* and *Aratrika* were performed by Dr. Balawantray and holy *prasada* was distributed to the public. In the evening a general meeting was held and it commenced with a prayer to Ramakrishna Bhagavan and the great Swamiji and many *Haribhajans* were sung to musical instruments.

Dr. Balawantray delivered a lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Paramahansa Deva and pointed out the spiritual and philosophical aspects of his life, referring to the great religious service being performed by Sri Ramakrishna Mission in India, America and other parts of the world.

Hari Kirtan of गुरुविश्वारात्रा (written by His Holiness Sri Sagar Maharaj) was specially selected for the occasion. Then followed Harinam Sankirtan and chanting of Hari Om, and Jay Sri Ramakrishna Bhagavan etc. The proceedings came to a close at about two o'clock at night with *pujana*, *aratrika* and distribution of *prasada*.

The assembled devotees paid high reverence to the Paramahansa Bhagavan's and Sri Swami Vivekananda's portrait.

Srinagar, Kashmir.

The anniversary was celebrated on 13th March at 5 p. m. in the premises of Sanatan Dharma Pratap Bhawan, Srinagar, Kashmir. The room was decorated with wall-mottos and pictures. The audience was overflowing. The proceedings began with the singing of "All India morning song" by the Boy Scouts. Pandit Daulat Ram addressed the audience first introducing the subject of the meeting. Dr. Shri Ram then gave a short sketch of the life of Paramahansa Ramakrishna in whose honour the day was celebrated. He at the same time touched on some incidents in his life and the teachings he gave to his disciples. A poem in Urdu was read in honour of the occasion. Prof. Pt. Nityanand Shastri in the end spoke on the qualifications of the great men of the world, who are sent here for the uplift of humanity. Poor Narayans were given food in Sri Ramakrishna's name.

At Other Places.

At Faridpur the 86th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated in due solemnity on the 13th March. Parties of *Sankirtan* paraded the streets from very early in the morning. From 1 p. m. till the evening about 1200 poor people were fed. At 5 p. m. a meeting was held presided over by Babu Mathuranath Moitra, n. i., a leader of the local bar. Babu Kamakhya Nath Mitra, M. A., Principal of the local College and Babu Prakas Chandra Ghosh, B. L., spoke on the life and teachings of Paramahansa Deva. Two very able papers were also read—one by Kaviraj Nagendra Nath Bhishagratna and the other by Sreeman Atul Chandra Sen. Great enthusiasm prevailed.

At Betila (Dacca) the anniversary of Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated with great eclat. About a thousand poor were sumptuously fed in the noon. All the students of the neighbouring villages and leading men of the sub-division graced the occasion with their presence. A huge mass meeting was convened in the evening under the presidency of Pundit Upendra Chandra Goswami. All the villagers took a vow before the picture of Sri Ramakrishna not to spend money in luxuries, or in-

dulge in fraternal quarrels but to improve the condition of their ancient and deserted villages.

At Sylhet, Assam, the 86th Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated by the Bhaktas on the 13th March, with imposing solemnities. In the evening more than two thousand people including sweepers and beggars of the town were fed. Many ladies attended the Utsav.

⁷ At Woriore, S. India, under the auspices of Venu Vilasa Sangam the 86th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated and a special meeting was held by the above Society on the 13th March. The special item of the programme was the offering of a prayer to Almighty God in memory of the Great Soul. The following resolution was passed and carried with great acclamation, the audience standing: That this Association places on record its sense of pride, privilege, and pleasure in contributing its own quota to the All-India celebration of the 86th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the renewer of the Modern Spirit, by holding a meeting on the subject, "The Paramahansa Spirit," and prays to Almighty God that that "Spirit" may be an inspiration to the rising generation of India.

At Chavara, S. India, the 86th birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated by the members of the Ramakrishna Vilasam Library on Sunday, the 13th March, 1921. There were Puja and prayer in the morning. From 3 to 4 p. m. there was Bhajana and it was followed by a procession. At about 5 p. m. the public assembled in the local vernacular High School and a meeting was held with Mr. N. Sanakara Pillai, the Ayurvedic doctor, in the chair. Mr. N. Trivikraman Tampi B. A. gave a speech on "the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna." It was followed by another lecture by Mr. P. Krishnan Nampiathiri about "the Ramakrishna Mission." After the meeting there was Bhajana and all dispersed, after Aratrika at about 8 p. m.

The eighty-sixth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva was also celebrated at the Vivekananda Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur, F.M.S.; Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Lucknow; Ramakrishna Archanalaya, Entally, Calcutta; Ramakrishna

Math, Koalpara; Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur; Ramakrishna Samity, Parseebagar; Ramakrishna Mandap, Alipuri; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Kishanpore (Dehra Dun); and Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati.

NEWS AND NOTES.

⁸ The thirteenth annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, for the year 1919, shows a good record of activity. The total number of patients treated during the year in the indoor hospital of the Sevashrama was 276, of which 215 were discharged cured and 17 died. In the outdoor dispensary 35582 patients were treated, of whom 3708 were new patients and 31874 were repeated numbers. Some cases of distressed people unable to come to the Hospital were treated at their homes and supplied with medicine and diet, and some ladies living in Brindaban and reduced to poverty were helped with money grants. The total receipts of the Sevashrama during the year, including receipts for the building fund, were Rs. 4970-0-0, and the expenditure was Rs. 3244-1-3, leaving a balance of Rs. 1725-3-0, of which Rs. 1250-0-0 belongs to the permanent fund, Rs. 413-0-9 to the building fund and Rs. 62-2-3 to the Sevashrama Balance with the Secretary. It thus appears that the financial condition of the Sevashrama is far from satisfactory and it appeals to the generous public to help the institution in carrying on its work of benevolence. Its principal wants are funds for the new building under construction, contributions to the permanent fund for the permanent financial basis of the institution, and funds for an outdoor dispensary and separate infectious ward, which latter are urgently needed considering the expansion of the work of the Sevashrama. It is to be hoped that the generous public will warmly respond to this noble call.

On the occasion of the *Ardhakumbha Mela*, held at Hardwar in the months of March and April this year, nearly three lakhs of people assembled, Sadhus and lay devotees. The Seva-Samiti of Allahabad made excellent arrangements for the convenience of the pilgrims. The Ramakrishna Mis-

sion Sevashrama, Kankhal opened a branch centre for the distribution of medicines and giving of relief to the pilgrims. Swami Kavunamanda with a batch of fifty workers also rendered service to the pilgrims.

SWAMI Sharvananda, President Ramakrishna Math, Madras gave a series of lectures under the auspices of the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta, on some of the burning topics of the day. The subjects of his lectures were : (1) Indian Nationalism and Vedanta, (2) Real Democracy, (3) The Ideal of its Realization, (4) The Cult of the Coming Man.

Swami Paramananda spent two weeks of February in Cincinnati and Louisville, U. S. A. He reached Cincinnati on Saturday, the 12th, and on Sunday conducted a devotional Service at the rooms of the Branch Centre there. In the evening he spoke on "Higher Consciousness" at the New Thought Temple before a large audience. The following evening he delivered a lecture in the neighbouring town of Hamilton on "India and Her Message." His next lecture in the Assembly Room of the Gibson Hotel called out so numerous an attendance that it was almost impossible to accommodate all who came. The Swami's subject was "Supernatural Powers." On Wednesday afternoon one of the members of the Cincinnati Centre arranged a meeting in her home at Hyde Park, one of the outlying suburbs of the city. A large number of friends responded to her invitation and listened with deep interest to what the Swami said to them regarding "The Power of Silence and Meditation." On the same evening the Swami spoke again at the New Thought Temple, his subject being "Life Hereafter." A class meeting in the Rooms of the Centre on Thursday evening closed his visit. Besides these lectures the Swami spoke before the Greek Circle of the Woman's Club of Cincinnati on "Buddha and His Message to the World." This proved to be an occasion of special interest, the Swami's words arousing great enthusiasm among those present.

The Birthda, Anniversary of the illustrious Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on January 30th, at the Hindu Temple in San Francisco,

California, with unusual devotion and enthusiasm. The temple auditorium was tastefully decorated with fragrant yellow *acacias* and beautiful pink roses and choicest greens. The soft colouring of the walls and the artistic inverted lights, recently installed, harmonised wonderfully with the picturesque decorations and the ochre-coloured robe of Swami Prakashananda.

The Swami chose for his morning topic, "Swami Vivekananda, His contribution to the World-thought." He emphasized Swamiji's teaching of *Shraddha* as being absolutely vital and necessary in all fields of activity of individuals as well as nations. He touched upon the veritable genius of the world-renowned Swami, and laid special stress on the "spiritualisation of the human race" as being one of the great messages of the broad and universal teachings of the Vedanta to the world.

The topic for the evening service was, "Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of the Harmony of Religions." Swami spoke at length of Swamiji's ideal of a Universal religion as revealed to him by the life and teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. It was an illuminating exposition of the broad and universal ideas suited to this age which is so given to the narrow and sectarian view-points of different religions.

Swami Abhedananda sat on the platform with Swami Prakashananda, and asked by the latter recited a few interesting reminiscences and spoke of the greatness of the founder of the worldwide Vedanta movement.

The sweet and melodious chanting of Swami Prakashananda at both the services, the inspiration of his words, and the favourite songs of Swamiji beautifully sung by Mrs. Edith Allen carried the audience far above their ordinary and commonplace thoughts and ideas of life, and made each one feel the blessed presence of this great Acharya, the greatest and ablest apostle of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, the benign and uplifting influence of which is undoubtedly working towards bringing out the higher civilisation and evolution of humanity.

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ग्रन्थालय भारत



प्राप्य वराजिष्यो धर्म ।

Katha Upanishad, I, viii, 8

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

Vol. XXVI]

JUNE 1921

[No. 299

THE BAY OF BENGAL—A DESCRIPTION.*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

NOW our ship has reached the sea. The description which you read in Kalidasa's Raghuvansham of the shores "of the sea appearing blue with forests of palm and other trees," and "looking like a slender rim of rust on the tire of an iron wheel" etc.—is not at all accurate and faithful. With all my respect for the great poet, it is my belief that he never in his life saw either the ocean or the Himalayas.†

Here there is a blending of white and black water, somewhat resembling the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuna at Allahabad. Though Mukti may be rare in most places, it is sure at "Hardwar,

Allahabad and the mouth of the Ganges." But they say that this is not the real mouth of the river. However let me salute the Lord here, for "He has His eyes, head and face everywhere."‡

How beautiful! As far as the eye reaches, the deep blue water of the sea is rising into foamy waves and dancing rhythmically to the winds. Behind us lies the sacred water of the Ganges, whitened with the ashes of Shiva's body, as we read in the description, "Shiva's matted locks whitened by the foam of the Ganges."¶ The water of the Ganges is comparatively still. In front of us lies the parting line between the waters. There ends the white water. Now begins the blue water of the ocean,—before, behind and all round there is only blue,

* Written en route to the West to a brother-disciple.

† Swamiji afterwards changed his opinion with regard to the last point, i.e., Kalidasa's acquaintance with the Himalayas.

‡ Gita XV.

¶ Sankaracharya's Hymn.

blue water everywhere, breaking incessantly into waves. The sea has blue hair, his body is of a blue complexion, and his garment is also blue. We read in the Puranas that millions of Asuras hid themselves under the ocean through fear of the Gods. To-day their opportunity has come, to-day Neptune is their ally, and Eolus is at their back. With hideous roars and thundering shouts they are to-day dancing a terrible war-dance on the surface of the ocean, and the foamy waves are their grim laughter! In the midst of this tumult is our ship, and on board the ship, pacing the deck with lordly steps, are men and women of that nation which rules the sea-girt world, dressed in charming attire, with a complexion like the moonbeams, looking like self-reliance

and self-confidence personified, and appearing to the black races as pictures of pride and haughtiness. Overhead the thunder of the cloudy monsoon sky, on all sides the dance and roar of foam-crested waves, and the din of the powerful engines of our ship setting at naught the might of the sea—it was a grand conglomeration of sounds, to which I was listening, lost in wonder, as if in a half-waking state, when, all of a sudden, drowning all these sounds, there fell upon my ears the deep and sonorous music of commingled male and female voices singing in chorus the national anthem, "Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!" Startled, I looked around and found that the ship was rolling heavily, and I was roused from my reverie.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

HOW can you know man until you know God" was the characteristic retort of an Indian sage, who was told by the great Greek philosopher Socrates that the greatest study for mankind was man. The Vedanta philosophy declares in nomistakable terms that the real man, though associated for the time being with body and mind which cover his Self-knowledge, is no other than Brahman, the cause of all causes. By the realisation of Brahman alone can man attain to the true knowledge of himself and everything else in the world and is able to find out a real solution for the riddle of the universe, thereby gaining peace that passeth all understanding. And this Self-realisation or God-vision is the aim and goal of human evolution. Like motion in a straight line, eternal progress, ever

approaching but never reaching the goal, exists only in the world of theory and were it possible, it would be no more fruitful than the labour of the deer in running after the mirage to quench its thirst. An ideal which ever remains unattained and eludes our grasp is not of much practical value unless it finds its realisation in actual life.

Human evolution is the gradual unfoldment of the divine powers that lie dormant in man, by the control of nature, external and internal, reaching its goal in the full expression of the Self-power and knowledge in everything, towards which all the activities of life consciously or unconsciously move. This evolution is as a rule a slow process and is to be brought about with great care and patience, that

we may not baffle the very object of life in our haste to reach the goal. Difficult as it is to realise the highest ideal in practical life, we are to proceed step by step with great perseverance, from lower truths to higher truths until the very highest is reached.

It is imperative on our part to have a clear conception of the ultimate goal and never to lose sight of it in our advance towards it. We may have, at the outset, to rest satisfied with only a working ideal, which we are forced to adopt as a temporary measure owing to our incapacity to follow the highest, but it is of the utmost importance to bear in mind that this is only a means to the end, a step towards the attainment of the *summum bonum* and has to be transcended as we develop and muster strength.

Truth comes to those who are ever ready to follow the path of righteousness regardless of consequences, without any sense of fear or barter. Whatever deficiency we may have in working out the ideal owing to the limitations and infirmities of human nature, any attempt to lower it down to conform to our weakness, to pursue it for the sake of some ulterior motive, to take it up as a means to some social or political end, will only lead us astray and bring about the utter ruin of the spiritual life, however intense may be our struggles and endeavours, however earnest our selfless work, meditation, devotional practice or Yogic Sadhana.

Spirituality does not consist in the observance of certain rules of eating, drinking and marriage, nor in the mere acceptance of some forms or dogmas,

which though serving as supports in our spiritual childhood cannot constitute our goal. It means the realisation of the divinity within by means of an intense yearning for God and a pure selfless life. And this spiritual hankering is like the organic wants of hunger and thirst a reality to him who finding no satisfaction in the creature comforts of life, and being spurred on by the sense of want and consequent pain, cannot rest till he comes at last to the Self, the real home and haven of peace and safety. He is then fortunate enough to get a glimpse of the truth which exists in the depth of super-consciousness, beyond the domain of mind and matter and this marks the dawn of his spiritual life.

The intensity of the life spiritual is to be measured by real *Vairagya* which is often wrongly supposed to mean a negative virtue but really implies an intense love and striving for the ideal and consequent dispassion for things that stand as obstacles in the path of its realisation. The very thought of renunciation is, not infrequently, enough to strike terror into the hearts of many, as it seems to conjure up in their mind a spectre which threatens to destroy the human society with all its sympathy, friendship and love and thus cut away the very source of the so-called fullness and varied experiences of the natural human life. But the fear is the product of ignorance and misunderstanding. The advocates of renunciation do not in reality denounce the world. The ideal is the deification, a transfigured vision from a different centre, of the world with its objects and interests, that now attract the mind and the senses by their glamour and superficial values. It is the giving up of the false to realise the true nature.

of things which is no other than God Himself. So does the Isopanishad advise—“त्वं वावृत्यमिदं सर्वं विद्यक्षु जगया जगत्”—“Whatever exists in the ever-changing world is to be enveloped with the Lord.” Though it is unquestionable that renunciation in its extreme form, both external and internal, is absolutely necessary for those aspiring to gain the full vision of truth, yet a gradual advancement towards the highest ideal of renunciation for the majority of mankind who cannot be expected to follow it *in toto* is in keeping with the spirit of the Scriptures.

At the dawn of the spiritual career, whatever course of Sadhana a person may follow, he begins as a dualist and limited as his vision is, thinks himself to be different from God and His universe. As he continues in his path, the intensity of his soul becomes greater, and higher and higher visions come to him. The limited individuality is gradually replaced by an ever-broadening sense of existence, and the increasing feeling of unity with the Divine and all that exists, brings to him greater freedom and peace, which are sure indications of his progress. But at last when the individual loses himself in God, the ocean of universal Existence, Bliss and Knowledge, he is for ever freed from desires and clinging to body and matter. He becomes perfectly pure, regains his lost glory, becomes his Self again; death, misery and error lose all their meaning for him. There is no more fear, no more birth and death. “Where is there ignorance and misery for him who sees the Unity?” says the Sruti. Through multiplicity and duality he at last has reached the Unity, has attained the end of human progress, and evolution can proceed no further. He has indeed

known the cause of all causes for आत्मने वा दर्शनेन अशनेन मत्या विज्ञानेन इदं सर्वं विदितव्—“By the vision, hearing, meditation and knowledge of the Atman everything is known.”

When the man of realisation descends from the height of superconsciousness to the plane of mind and matter, to the world of senses, his life is tinged with an unearthly hue and he finds everything to be transformed. He is, as it were, transported into a world he never knew before, whose light and meaning are different from those of his previous natural world which has perished along with the destruction of his desires and attachments. He sees as the Gita says—

सर्वभूतयामानम् सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते बोगतुल्यामा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

“With his heart concentrated by Yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self.” Such a man alone has got the full vision of Truth. His life itself is a veritable consecration and all his manifold activities form parts of one-continued worship to God.

It is narrated in the Puranas that the sage Vasishtha seeing Sri Ramachandra's intense *Vairagya* and determination to renounce the world told him—“Rama, first reason with me and then leave the world if you please. I ask, is the world separate from God? If it be so, you are at liberty to forsake it.” Pondering over these words Rama saw that it was God who manifested Himself as the individual souls and the universe, and in His Being everything existed; and so he remained silent. To the person on whom such a vision dawns the effulgence of the Atman shines forth in and through everything—the

beautiful reflects the beauty of the Soul, the love of God finds a transfigured expression in the love of man, from the highest being down to the meanest worm that crawls on the face of the earth everything manifests His glory, and is sweet and blissful. This is possible only for him who has been blessed with the vision Divine by cutting through the lower strata of ego as Sri Ramakrishna says to the effect—"You go back to the Supreme Being and your personality becomes one with His. This is Samadhi. You then retrace your steps, get back your ego and return to the point whence you started only to see that your ego is derived from the same Supreme Being and that God, Soul and Nature are but different phases of the one Reality."

The attitude of the Knower of Brahman is clear. But perplexing is the mentality of those who without knowing the Reality, without purging the mind of its dross of desires, and passions for name, fame and gratification of the senses, dare to enjoy the world with renunciation and think that they taste the bliss of *mukti* amidst the infinite bonds of the world; but unlike the man of knowledge they suffer from misery and pain which sense-enjoyment brings in its train.

There is, however, a surer way to happiness and of this Swami Vivekananda spoke to Ingersoll, the great atheistic lecturer of America—"I know a better way to squeeze the orange of this world than you do and I get more out of it. I know I cannot die, so I am not in a hurry; I know there is no fear, so I enjoy the squeezing. I have no duty, no bondage, wife, children and property; I can love all men and women. Everyone

is God to me. Think of the joy of loving man as God! Squeeze your orange this way and get ten thousand-fold more out of it. Get every single drop."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Their Spiritual Relation.

RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."

(Continued from page 124.)

SRI Ramakrishna understood Narendra-nath as possessing a high spiritual capacity and therefore endeavoured to make him realise the truth of the Advaita philosophy, the identity of Jiva and Brahman. When he visited Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would give him books on Advaita philosophy like the "Ashtavakra Samhita" to read. Narendra was at that time a believer in and worshipper of the formless but qualified Brahman and to his mind books on Advaita philosophy appeared to be affected with the taint of atheism. At the request of Sri Ramakrishna, reading a little from such books, he would speak out openly: "What is the difference between atheism and such views (Advaita)? The created being will think himself as one with the Creator! Can there be a greater sin than this? I am God, you are God, all mortal things are God—can there be a more unreasonable statement than that? The Rishis, the authors of such books, must have lost their head, how else could they write such stuff?" Sri Ramakrishna laughed at hearing such words from the plain-spoken Narendranath, but without abruptly crossing his feeling and sentiments, said:

" You may not accept those views but why should you on that account condemn the Rishis or limit the infinitude of God? Your work is to call on the Lord who is Truth, and believe in whatever way He manifests Himself to you." But Narendranath would not pay much heed to such words. For whatever was not provable by reason, appeared to him as false and to stand against all falsehoods was his innate nature. Therefore in conversation with other persons besides Sri Ramakrishna he would show arguments against Advaitism and sometimes would not hesitate to use words of sharp criticism and biting sarcasm.

A man named Pratap Chandra Hazra then lived at Dakshineswar. His worldly condition was not very prosperous. Therefore, even while seeking after spiritual progress, the desire for money often reigned in his heart and selfish desires lurked at the root of his spiritual practices. But hiding that idea from the outward view of people, he would speak lofty words of the unselfish love of God and endeavour to get the praise of men. And moreover it was natural to him to estimate in £. s. d. every step of spiritual practice and perhaps the idea of the satisfaction of the desire for money by the acquirement of supernatural powers through spiritual practices would sometimes peep into his mind. Sri Ramakrishna from the first day understood that feeling of his mind and instructed him to renounce those selfish ideas and to follow the unselfish worship of the Lord. The weak-minded Hazra, discarded such instructions and impelled by self-delusion, egoism and self-interest, lost no chance to proclaim himself before persons coming on a visit to Sri Ramakrishna that he (Hazra) was no ordinary spiritual personality.

Inspite of all these, there was still within him a genuine desire to be good. For Sri Ramakrishna even knowing of such conduct on his part and rebuking him sharply for it occasionally, did not send him away from him altogether. But he would sometimes warn some amongst us not to mix familiarly with him, saying: " Hazra has a very calculating selfish mind; don't listen to him."

Among other characteristics, Hazra had this feeling within him not to believe in anything easily. Considering his scant education, his intellect was sharp. Thus, he could follow well, when Narendranath would discuss the philosophical views of Western agnostic philosophers. The intelligent Narendra was very pleased with Hazra for that and coming to Dakshineswar would spend an hour or two according to leisure with him in conversation. The mind of Hazra always bowed to the sharp intellect of Narendranath. He would listen attentively to the words of Narendranath and sometimes prepare a *chillum* of tobacco for him. Seeing such a pleased attitude of Narendra towards Hazra, we would sometimes make fun and say: " Hazra Mahasaya is the friend of Narendra."

On the occasion of Narendra's visit to Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would fall into trance at the very sight of him. Afterwards regaining a half-external mood he would spend with great delight a few hours with him in spiritual converse. Then by words and endeavours he would try to make him realise in inner consciousness the high spiritual truths. Sometimes he would feel a desire to hear songs from him; but hearing the sweet voice of Narendra would fall into a trance. But Narendranath's song would not stop at that and he would go on singing in an

absorbed consciousness song after song for hours together. Sri Ramakrishna regaining a half-external consciousness would ask him to sing a particular song. But he would not be satisfied without hearing at the last from Narendranath, the song, 'Whatever is in the world, art Thou Thyself.' Then some time would pass in talk on the points of Advaitavada, e. g. Jiva and Ishvara, their real Swarupa, etc. Thus Narendranath's presence raised a wave of bliss at Dakshineswar.

One day Sri Ramakrishna spoke to Narendranath many words about the identity of Jiva and Brahman in Advaita knowledge. Narendra attentively listening to those words could not appreciate them, and when his talk ended, he (Narendra) went to Hazra Mahasaya, and raised the topic for discussion and said: "Is it ever possible? The glass is God, the cup is God, whatever you are observing and all of us are God!" Hazra Mahasaya also joined in the talk and ridiculing in a similiar strain raised peals of laughter over the subject. Sri Ramakrishna hearing Narendranath laugh, came out of his room in a half-tranced condition and saying, 'What are you talking?' touched Narendranath and fell into a trance. Narendranath said: "At that wonderful touch of Sri Ramakrishna that day a mental change came on me in a minute. Astonished I began to see that really there was nothing but God in the whole universe. But even beholding like that I kept silent, observing how long that state of consciousness would last. But the absorption of that mood did not abate a bit that day. I returned home, and found it was the same thing there, and whatever I saw was He Himself—I felt like it. Sitting down to eat I saw the food, the plate, the man who was serving, all these and I myself

were nothing else but Him. Taking one or two morsels, I sat silent and absorbed: 'Why are you sitting silent, eat,' my mother called out and roused from the mood at these words I began eating again. Thus, while eating, sleeping, going to college, I began to feel and observe like that, and lived always as one absorbed in that spiritual consciousness. I was walking along the street and a carriage was coming but I felt no inclination as before to move away from its path for fear it might come upon me—I felt, as if it and I were identical. My hands and feet remained benumbed and I got no satisfaction by eating but felt as if someone else was eating. Sometimes I would lie down in the course of eating and again getting up I would start eating. Some days I would eat too much, but felt no uneasiness for that. My mother feeling anxious for my condition said: 'I see you have a dire disease within you'; and sometimes would say: 'He will live not long.' When the above possessed mood of the mind abated a little, the universe appeared to me as made of the stuff of dream. Walking along the side of the tank in the public park I would strike my head against the railing and test if it was a real tangible iron railing or formed of the stuff of dream. From the numbness of the hand and feet I suspected if it would develop into paralysis. Thus I could not escape from the absorption and possession of that state of consciousness for sometime. When the normal external consciousness returned, I thought that it was a glimpse of Advaita knowledge. Then what the scriptures say is not false! Since then I have not been able to doubt the truth of Advaitism."

Another wonderful incident we heard from Narendranath at another time. He

mentioned it to us in the winter of the year 1884 when we were specially intimate with Narendranath. But we infer that the incident happened about the time of the above narration. Therefore we will narrate it to the reader now. We remember that on that day a little before noon we arrived at Narendranath's house and spent up to 11 o'clock in the night with him. Swami Ramakrishnanandaji was also with us. The divine attraction which we felt towards Narendra was increased a thousand-fold that day. Previous to this we knew Sri Ramakrishna as a God-conscious man, a *Siddhapurusha*. But the impressive words of Narendranath brought a new light within us this day. We understood that the wonderful facts and incidents which were recorded in the life of such world-teachers as the blessed Sri Chaitanya and Jesus, and which we had so long disbelieved, were daily happening in the life of Sri Ramakrishna—that by mere wish or touch he was loosening the bonds of past actions of man and giving him divine love, or by putting him in trance was making him a partaker of divine bliss, or by turning the life of his devotee in a spiritual path and bringing about the vision of God within a short time he was making him feel blessed for ever. We remember distinctly how speaking of the divine realisations which had come in his life by the grace of Sri Ramakrishna, Narendranath took us out for a walk to the side of the tank in the Cornwallis Square and there staying sometime absorbed within himself gave vent to the inner spiritual bliss which possessed him by singing in his angelic voice—

The Lord is distributing the treasure of Divine Love,
Come all who will partake of it:
The Love flows in profuse abundance and yet
there is no end.

In that tide of love,—Santipur is about to sink,
While it overflows Nuddea.
(In the waves of Divine Love of Sri Gouranga
Nuddea is flooded over).

When the song ended, Narendranath as if addressing himself slowly said: "Truly is he distributing Love, Devotion, Knowledge and Mukti. The Lord is freely giving to all whom He chooses. What wonderful power (remaining silent for some time)! In the night I was sleeping with closed doors; suddenly he attracted and brought at Dakshineswar—him who is within this body; then after many instructions and spiritual talks permitted me to return. He can do everything—the Lord of Dakshineswar can do everything."

The shades of evening deepened into the darkness of night. We were not able to see each other, and there was no need to see. For the flaming words and sentinels of Narendranath entered the inmost recesses of the heart and brought such a divine intoxication that the body was reeling and the long familiar and tangible world receded into the distant world of dream, and the truth that the Infinite and Eternal God impelled by unselfish grace descends on earth as a finite embodiment to release the bonds of man and turn the wheel of Religion—which the majority of mankind thinks to be an unreal figment of imagination—took form and appeared before us as a living reality. Unconscious of the passing of time, we suddenly heard the stroke of nine from a distant clock. With reluctance we were thinking of taking leave, when Narendranath said: "Come, let me accompany you some distance to your home." While walking, we got so absorbed in talk on the previous subjects, that reaching home we thought we did not do well in

allowing Narendra to come so far with us. Therefore inviting him home and making him partake of a little food, we also walked and accompanied him back to his home. We remember another fact of that day. Entering our house Narendra suddenly stood still, and said, "I have seen this house before. The passages of this house, its rooms are all familiar to me—wonderful!" We have related before the fact of Narendranath's realising similar phenomena and the reason which he gave for them. Therefore we do not remonstrate them here.

SOME VIEWS ON EDUCATION.

THE present writer will endeavour in this article to interpret the views of Swami Vivekananda on Education from his published utterances on the subject. "Education," as Swami Vivekananda says, "is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. It is neither book-learning nor diverse knowledge but the training by which the current and expression of the will are brought under control and become fruitful." It is a preparation for life. With the ancient Hindus it was not only a preparation for this life but also for the life to come. Both these aspects were given a proper place unlike the modern education which leaves the latter either as impracticable or as useless. Many, however, think that education in ancient India was one-sided, the religious side alone being developed; that the Hindus' love for philosophy which taught the unreality of the world led them to neglect the practical side of life. But if we study the history of ancient India we find that this is not true. No doubt religion was given a greater prominence but all the same the practical side of life was also developed and given its proper

place. Even from the oldest Upanishads we learn that the students were taught various other branches of knowledge also. From the conversation between Narada and Sanatkumara in the Chhandogya Upanishad we find that mathematics, politics, astronomy, logic, science, fine arts etc. formed parts of the curriculum. The Hindus had made great progress in all these subjects. But unfortunately owing to unfavorable historical circumstances the progress of the nation was arrested and no more development was made in these sciences. But with religion it was different. It was the central preoccupation of their life and this they could not give up. That is why religion still survives and that is what keeps us a nation yet. Had the political and social circumstances been more favourable India would have had a worthy place among the nations of the world even in the practical side of life as she has in religion.

The most characteristic feature of ancient Indian education was the relationship between the teacher and the disciple, which was considered even nearer than that between the father and the son. Nowhere do we find such an ideal relationship. The student entered the life of Brahmacarya at an early age. From that time till he finished his studies he lived with his teacher who regarded him as a member of his own family and undertook to teach him everything he knew. The teacher took no fees though at the end of the course the student usually made presents to him. The student on the other hand had to do some services to the teacher. He paid him great reverence and obeyed him implicitly. The life at the Guru's was not only a period of learning but also one of strict discipline which was intended to hold before the student an ideal of high morals and character. The student was directed always to select such a teacher as was versed in the Vedas and was a knower of Brahman. At any rate the teacher was a man of great intellect, spirituality and moral character.

Another characteristic of the ancient Indian education was that the teaching was concerned more with individuals than with a class. Every student was separately instructed by the teacher. This was advantageous, for every student could develop at his own pace according to his intelligence. The class consisted of a rather small number of students so that the teacher could give equal attention to everyone. Even when there were big universities they were each only a collection of a number of such groups.

Let us now turn to the present system of education. It has not the good points of the ancient days while its defects are many. Swamiji says : "An education which does not help one to fight out successfully the battle of life, which does not mould one's character nor create the idea of self-sacrifice for the commonweal, do you call it education?"

The greatest defect of the present day system which Swamiji pointed out was the loss of Shraddha. "We have had a negative education all along from our boyhood. We have only learnt that we are nobody. Seldom are we given to understand that great men were born in our country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet * * * We have learnt only weakness. We believe we are weak. So how can't it be but that Shraddha is lost? This loss of Shraddha has brought in all evils among us and is bringing in more and more." This Shraddha has to be brought back again—the Shraddha which emboldened Nachiketas to face Yama and question him. Truly does the Gita say, "अहमाश्रद्धाद्यं संश्वाम्य विनश्वनि"—"The ignorant, the man without Shraddha, he who doubts comes to grief."

How then to get back this Shraddha? Swamiji's view was that we have to introduce again the worship of the great saints. Sri Ramachandra, Mahavira and Sri Krishna thundering forth the strong words of the Gita

are to be held up as ideals to the people. The worship of the Divine Mother, the giver of strength and purity, the source of all power, must also be encouraged. Our young children must be given books written in easy language containing stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the Upanishads and also the lives of heroes like Mahavira, Bhishma, Pratap Singh, Shivaji etc. A history of ancient India written according to the modern ways of thinking must be prescribed as text-books for students of higher classes. This will bring before them the glory of the past and create self-reliance in them.

Let us next see what Swamiji's views were on the elements of a true Indian educational system. He laid great stress on three points : The period of Brahmacharya, Guru-griha-vasa and thirdly, religion. The period of Brahmacharya is quite essential. The student ought to be trained to practise absolute Brahmacharya. That is the basis of the whole future life and character-building. He was very much against the early marriage of boys, especially when they have not yet finished their student career. No one can stand the burden of two stages of life at one and the same time. It would mean killing the student by putting great strain on him. As to Guru-griha-vasa Swamiji says, "My idea of education is personal contact with the Guru. Living with the Guru as of old is very essential. But it has to be put on a broader basis to suit the modern conditions and times. One should live from his very boyhood with a Guru whose character is like a blazing fire and should have before him a living example of the highest teaching. Without the personal life of a teacher there would be no education. Take your universities, what have they done? They have not produced one original man. Every man of originality that has been produced has been educated elsewhere and not in this country, or they have gone to the old universities.

to cleanse themselves of superstitions." Some, however, criticise this system of Guru-grhya-vasa as it is said to enslave the pupil's mind and produce a mentality devoid of originality and initiative. The fact that this system had produced great men, they explain away by saying that, that only shows the capability of the human mind to transcend all limitations and not the goodness of the system. In fact these remarks seem to be made loosely. There was nothing enslaving in it. The student was given full freedom and opportunities to develop in his own way, the authority of the teacher being exercised only in extreme cases of unmanageability. There was also nothing in it oppressing the mind of the people. All the rules framed were such as only tended to strict obedience and discipline which is very much lacking in the present system. The system in itself was good though in the carrying out of its defects might have crept in, which is a factor that cannot be avoided in any system unless the teachers have the ideal always before them. Again the capability of the human mind to transcend limitations being the same in all ages and climes, the fact that the old system produced more great men shows that it was much better than the modern.

The next point that Swamiji emphasised upon was that education must be put on a religious basis. "Religion is the innermost core of education. It is the root thing." The modern system of education is not at all fit for imparting Brahma-vidya. Ancient India did not fail to put education on a religious basis. The Musalmans also had done so. But by an educational control pledged to religious neutrality in the matter of the Indian education, the problem of religious education will not be solved. This is the reason why National Universities are necessary.

Some of our leaders, however, think that religion has been the one cause of our downfall and unless it is banished or its ideals

changed to suit our worldly purpose, no good will come to India. But these good people forget that each nation has one central fact which cannot be so easily neglected. With India it is religion. "We know that to the Indian mind there is nothing higher than religious ideals; that is the keynote of Indian life and we can only work in the line of least resistance. Work in any line without first strengthening this would be disastrous. Our life-blood is religion, if it is strong and pure everything is right; political, social or any other material defects will all be cured if that blood is pure. You have withstood the shocks of centuries simply because you took great care of it, you sacrificed everything else for it. That is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory. Give it up and you die." Every nation has a national purpose of its own and it dies when the main purpose of its life is hurt. The Indians have always fixed Moksha or Spiritual Independence as the goal; this is our national purpose and education is only a means to this end. Granting that God, Soul and Mukti are all false, yet these forces have determined our national character for thousands of years and is it possible to change it now? A change would mean death. Neither is our national ideal after all a mistaken one. If we compare ourselves with other nations we find that we are yet a nation living and that our life is in religion. Whatever change we wish to bring about in this country, must be through religion. Then what is the cause of our degeneration? Our degeneration is not due to our religious ideal but due to the utter want of Dharma which allows man to seek for legitimate happiness in this world. In ancient days Dharma was compatible with religion. Buddhism however neglected the former and thrust the path of Moksha upon all. Such a thing is impossible for a nation as a whole. Renunciation can only result from a fully-lived life, from its experiences gathered and its values worked up.

One rule cannot apply to all. No doubt Moksha is superior but the way to it is only through Dharma, the fullness of ethical and practical life and unless one has gone through this he cannot attempt the life of Moksha, for he would be incapable of doing it and if he should in spite of that attempt, the result will only be destruction. We are now under a great self-deception. We think we are Sattvika whereas in reality we are Tamasika. Arjuna had also fallen into such a deception but was put on the right path by the Lord and the result was that he took one big stride towards what he was posing himself to be. त्वं प्रथमः पार्य नैतरस्युपरप्यते—“Yield not to unmanliness. O son of Pritha! I'll doth it become thee.” तत्पात्रसुचिष्ठ वरो तत्पत्ति—“Therefore arise and win fame.” These shall be the ideals for the generality of the nation at present. It is only by following this teaching of the Lord that we can rise again.

The Vedic religion had realised that one rule cannot apply to all and so it had made provision for Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The last they made the goal and the previous subservient to this and means to this final goal. Our aims and ideals are all right. But we have only to take care of the method by which to attain them. Our reformers are only too much aware of the degeneration that has set in and in their eagerness to throw off the rotten portion there is the danger of their inserting the knife so deep as to kill the patient also.

Another thing we have to guard ourselves against is the tendency in us to lower the ideal by compromising it with the worldly life. We should never reconcile fleshly vanities with the highest ideals. That would be dragging God to the level of the apparent man. There is no use giving apologies for our sense-vanities. Rather we must rise one step higher in order to elevate ourselves to our chosen ideals than drag the ideals down to reconcile them with our imperfect conduct. This is also one of the causes that has lead to our

degeneration. It is this pretended adherence to our religious ideal which springs from a mere negative attitude towards it, that has caused our degeneration. True spirituality on the other hand is something positive. All legitimate and regulated material happiness is bound to follow it. It alone can give strength, courage and fearlessness so essential in life. From religion spring all other expressions of man such as art, science etc.

Next let us see what Swamiji has to say with respect to the method of imparting education. “No one can teach anybody.” he used to say. “The teacher spoils everything by thinking that he is teaching. Thus the Vedanta says that within man is all knowledge—even in a boy it is so—and it requires only an awakening and that much is the work of a teacher. We have to do only so much for the boys, that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, eyes etc., and finally everything will become easy.” Another point which he used to emphasise upon was that true education is gained by constant living in communion with nature. To support this he used to cite the story of Satyakama. The seats of education, the Ashramas of ancient days, were very much suited for this communion with Nature, as they were situated far from the turmoil of society on the outskirts of some forest or countryside. The new school of reformers however criticise this. They say that boys and girls must be educated in such places where they are surrounded by the condition of life in which they have to move and which they have to meet in later life. Hence according to them the colleges and universities must not be situated in localities far from the bustle of city life and from the temptations incidental to it; for boys brought up in isolation always succumb to the first temptation they come across. They go to greater extremes of laxity of character and looseness of behaviour than the former. In

order that such a statement could be made we must have boys trained in isolation, side by side with those trained amidst society and observe their conduct in life. But we have not got the former class of boys and in the absence of such boys no comparison which is merely an imagination would be of any value. On the other hand, reason seems to prove the superiority of the former class. For one could fight the evil tendencies and circumstances better when he is spiritually stronger than when he is weaker. The sapling of a báyan tree requires hedging to protect it from cows, though when it grows to be a tree many cows may take shelter under it. To expose boys when their character is not yet built to the temptations of society is to undermine it from the very beginning.

A question may naturally arise: Was then Swamiji against our learning anything from the West? The reply is—certainly not. Nobody else was more aware of the deficiencies of our nation than he and this he wanted to make up by assimilating what is best in other nations. "You must understand this, my friend, that we have many things to learn from other nations. The man who says he has nothing more to learn is already at his last gasp. The Nation that says it knows everything is on the very brink of destruction! 'As long as I live so long do I learn.' But one point to note here is that when we shall take anything from others we must mould it after our own way. We shall add to our stock what others have to teach but we must always be careful to keep intact what is essentially our own. We must mould it after our own fashion, always preserving in full our characteristic Nationality."

The following quotation from the works of Swami Vivekananda gives us his views on an ideal education in a nut-shell as it were: "With our education has to be combined modern Western sciences. Both these are necessary. What we want are Western science

coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacarya as the guiding motto and also Shraddha and faith in one's own Self; to study, independent of foreign control different branches of the knowledge that is our own, and with it the English language and Western science; we need technical education, and all else which may develop the industries, so that men instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for themselves, and save something against a rainy day."

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF THE VEDANTA.*

THE deep significance that underlies the advent of Swami Vivekananda at the critical juncture of Hinduism is not very apparent. In the beginning of the present century when Occidental influence began to pour into India, when it began to be demonstrated to the children of the sages that their religion, God, soul and everything they had been struggling for, were mere words without meaning, that thousands of years of renunciation and austerities had been a gigantic failure, it was Swami Vivekananda who rose as the mouthpiece of Indians and voiced forth the accumulated wisdom and the synthetic civilisation of the Hindus and showed to the world at large that the Indians are not mere barbarians steeped in ignorance, but possess a rich civilisation and a wide culture which have come down to them in essential integrity from their ancestors. It was not for the first time that this note of hope was sounded, but the feeble notes of his predecessors fell flat more or less on the unwilling ears of their countrymen. India

* An address delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, on the 59th birthday celebration of Swami Vivekananda.

needed at this time a man of invincible moral courage and strong patriotic fibre who could handle the situation with a masterly grasp and with a bold spirit of conviction which no power on earth could shake. This was fulfilled in the person of Swami Vivekananda whose activities produced such a magical effect that the wavering national mind began to come back steadily to the true fold of Hinduism. He held up before the country the glowing national ideals and exhorted the people to cast off the sloughs of unassimilated culture and to be enthused with a spirit of self-reliance. The Indians who were a civilised Aryan nation even four thousand years ago, have, after seven centuries of national lifelessness, been showing indications of a reviving life and trying to stand on their own legs and to go beyond the dead forms of religion for recovering what is pure, nourishing and life-giving.

Some thinkers of the present day have laid much emphasis on the point that the salvation of India lies through politics and politics alone. Here Swamiji has totally differed from them. Swami Vivekananda with his forecasting vision and masterly grasp of the genius and temper of the national mind, declared again and again that if India ever rises, she must do so through religion. Read the histories of the great nations of antiquity that flourished on the memorable banks of the Tigris, the Euphratis and the Nile. Where are now to-day those great empires of the Near East which were once the wonders of the age? The grand fabrics of the Assyrian and the Babylonian, the Persian and the Egyptian, the Grecian and the Roman empires were built by the sword on the quicksand of militarism; but when that sword—the fulcrum of their strength—began to rust, the huge superstructures of their magnificent empires crumbled away into the dim region of dust and desolation. But India lives to-day in spite of so many vicissitudes which have swept over the land. What is then that

force which has kept the Indians a living nation even after so many changes of fortune and countless revolutions? It is the religion and the spirituality of Indian culture, which is the motive-power of the Indians' inspiration and the sustaining stamina of their national existence. No doubt politics has been one of the subsidiary aspects of Indian interests, but it never was, as it will also never be, the predominant factor of the life of the people. Swami Vivekananda has thus truly struck the keynote of the drift of Indian nationalism when he said,—“Each race has to make its own result, to fulfil its own mission. Political greatness or military power is never the mission of our race; it never was and it will never be. But there has been the other mission given to us, which is to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate, as it were, into a dynamo, all the spiritual energy of the race, and that concentrated energy is to pour forth in a deluge on the world, whenever circumstances are propitious. Let the Persian or the Greek, the Roman or the Frenchman march his battalions, conquer the world, and link the different nations together, but the philosophy and spirituality of India is ever ready to flow along the new-made channels into the veins of the nations of the world. The Hindu's calm brain must pour out its own quota to the sum-total of human progress. India's gift to the world is the *Light Spiritual*.” The spiritual basis of our national ideals and aspirations is all the more proved by the glowing examples of history that adorn the annals of India from the ancient to the modern times. If we transport ourselves in imagination to the dim but glorious days of antiquity—away back where history even fails to peep into the gloom of the past, we will find that during the reign of Sri Ramachandra, the whole field of India from the lofty Himalayas down to the distant Cape Comorin, was flooded with an inundation of spiritual upheaval which brought in its wake a vast accession of

national glory and material prosperity. Besides these, in the glorious days of the Pandavas, the mighty hosts of the Kauravas were destroyed on the memorable field of Kurukshetra where "Evil was sacrificed at the altar of Righteousness." Even if we sail down the stream of time and make a judicious analysis of the Buddhistic period, we find the same spirit at play and the Asokan empire was but an inevitable offshoot of the spiritual upheaval that began at the advent of Gantama Buddha. The rise of the Rajputs, the Marhattas and the Sikhs was unquestionably due to the waves of spiritual resurgence which India had witnessed during the Middle Ages.

Thus we see that religion is the backbone of the Indian life; and the experience of the lack of national solidarity in this land is due not to the influence of religion, as some would have us think but to her giving a go-by to the true spirit of the religious ideal and clinging to the mere shadows thereof, which consequently has debilitated the strong fibres of India's political, social and economical life. The glory of Hinduism lies in the fact, that it is far from teaching us weakening morbidity, or the suspension of the healthy culture of the noble qualities and faculties of the human mind and life, but it holds before us those great models and perfect ideals of charity, love and unselfishness which lead human life to blessedness and purity. But what is that religion which has been working through the national life? We had had enough of weeping and namby-pamby ideas, enough of enervating theories that have stunted the all-round growth of our humanity. What our country now wants is the organ-voice of the Upanishads in which we find the germs of all the subsequent development of India's religious thoughts. Every one who has studied the Indian aspirations and the bent of the national mind will easily find that in the sublime conceptions of our Hindu Ideal, the principle of the Vedanta is deeply

ingrained. Vedanta with its dominant note of Advaitism has twice in the past saved India from degradation and to-day Swami Vivekananda has again brought the message to the Indians. Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak of from every page. What a sublime picture it is to imagine the time when a naked Brahmin sitting upon a block of stone could be bold and fearless before even Alexander the Great who came to tempt him with gold and honour! Roused at seeing his boldness and strength Alexander standing on his authority as an Emperor said, "I will kill you, if you do not come." The Brahmin burst into laughter and said, "You never told such a falsehood in your life as you tell me just now. Who can kill me? Me you kill, emperor of the material world? Never! For I am the Spirit unborn and undecaying, never was I born and never shall I die, I am the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient, and you desire to kill me, child that you are!" Such is indeed the teaching of the Vedanta philosophy. Strength, physical, mental and spiritual is the watchword of the Upanishads. If ave faith in our scriptures and believe "I am the soul." Remember the immortal words of the Gita—

नैन द्विन्द्रियं रथाति नैर् वहति पात्रः ॥

न चेन्द्रेष्टव्यापो न शीष्यति माहतः ॥

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थायुरचलोदयं सनातनः ॥

"This Self weapons cut not; This, fire burns not; This, water wets not; and This, wind dries not. . . . Changeless, all-pervading, immoving, immovable, the Self is eternal." This is the strength that we get from the Upanishads; this is the faith we get from there and this is the religion in which we are born.

There is still the opinion current amongst many thinkers that the Vedanta talks only of the forest life of the recluse! But read the Gita, the greatest and the most authoritative commentary on the Vedas. It is there for

everyone in every occupation of life. "These conceptions of the Vedanta must come out, must remain not only in the forest, not only in the caves, but they must come to work out at the Bar and the Bench, in the Pulpit and the cottage of the poor, with the fishermen that are catching fish and the students that are studying. If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit he will be a better fisherman, if the student thinks he is the Spirit he will be a better student, if the lawyer thinks that he is the Spirit he will be a better lawyer and so on. Let every one be taught that the Divine is within and everyone will work out his own salvation." With the ushering in of a new era Swami Vivekananda stood before the world with this sublime message of the Vedanta which is alone competent to solve the intricate problems of the present and the coming generations. A man who has realised in his heart of hearts, that he is free, eternally free, becomes the recipient of the nectar of true liberty which is denied to those who are steeped in the mire of gross materialism and dense ignorance. Swamiji realised the glorious truth that God is in every person,— "working through all hands, walking through all feet and eating through every mouth," and naturally therefore his magnanimous heart beat with each throb of all the hearts that ached, known and unknown, and embraced the whole world in its all-encompassing love. It is this Vedantic idea of the equality of all men, the perception that there is that one eternal indivisible Soul dwelling in the tabernacle of each human body from the Brahmin, Kshatriya and the Vaishya down to the Chandala, the Pariah and other so-called untouchables who form the lowest strata of the society, that enabled Swamiji to call them his brethren and embrace them as his kith and kin. On one occasion at the Belur Math Swamiji while addressing a few Sannyasins in the year 1902 said, "Breaking the barriers of Don't-touchism, let us all go

at once and call out, 'Come all who are poor, miserable, wretched and down-trodden,' let us bring them all together in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. I see with divine vision there is one Brahman in all, in them and us—one Shakti dwells within; the only difference is of manifestation." This is indeed the spirit that lies at the root of our national evolution and furnishes the real basis for any idea of service to humanity. Herein lies the consummation of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. This Vedantic message Swamiji has again delivered to the world and it is highly gratifying to note that his ideas and aspirations are no longer "airy nothings," but are securing a permanent foothold in the field of action which is an unmistakable sign of a glorious era which will shortly open a new chapter in Indian life.

Europe, too, wants to-day the dictate of Indian philosophy, "the infinite oneness of the Soul which is the sanction of all morality." The Swami carried this message to the West and established in the Parliament of Religions the supremacy of catholic Hinduism. The clarion-note of the Vedanta still vibrates across the ocean in the distant lands of America and the continent of Europe. The rational West is earnestly bent on seeking out the rationale of all its philosophy and ethics. This great principle is even now unconsciously furnishing the basis of all the latest political and social aspirations that are coming up in England, in Germany, in France and in America; for it is the Vedanta and the Vedanta alone that can become the universal religion of man and the basis of all human aspirations. This is the one great life-giving idea which the world was waiting for and Swami Vivekananda, the pioneer of the modern movement, has delivered it to humanity.

KHAGENDRA NATH SIKDAR, M. A.



STORIES OF SAINTS.

(Retold by G.)

VII.

SISTER MARIANNA.

MEAR a quiet, little country town in Italy, stood long, long ago a convent shaded by chestnut trees; and a river flowed by. Here, in this old convent, dwelled some good Sisters, devout women, who went out among the poor, helping where help was needed. Early and late the Sisters laboured, nursing the sick and feeding the poor. And among all these good women, Sister Marianna was the most patient. Kind and willing, never sparing herself, quietly she went about, choosing for her share the heaviest and most difficult tasks. Thus she lived always content quietly to bear the burden of others. She loved God and this made her most happy. And she was rich too, for God had given her the grace to choose not the world's deceitful riches, but the wealth one cannot lose,—the wealth one takes with him when this earthly life is done.

The old and the feeble and the sickly and the heavy-hearted, all knew and loved Sister Marianna. For she was always sure to appear when her presence was most needed. And to have Sister Marianna near was such a comfort! Her kindly eyes and cheerful countenance and encouraging words brought hope unto the most desolate heart. And she carried food and warm clothes and blessing as she wended her way over mountain paths in summer heat and winter cold. And with her travelled One whom she always kept close to her heart. And He was the source of all her strength.

And Sister Marianna was happy—oh, so happy! —if in her scanty hours of leisure she could enter her little whitewashed cell. For there, from the wall, looked at her the dear and holy faces that she loved above all else. From an old and faded picture the Holy Infant, Jesus, in His Mother's arms looked at her. And her faith and spirit of devotion lent to the dear faces a beauty and glory not seen there by anyone else. And often when she returned in the early morning from a lonely home where she had watched the sick by night,

she would gather a few flowers, with the morning dew still on them and place them on the wooden shelf before the Holy Child and His Blessed Mother. And so Sister Marianna's life was full of sunshine, for in toiling for the Lord she had found the hidden sweetness that lies stored in common things.

But the time came—poor Sister!—when her step grew heavy as one winter, day after day, she climbed the steep mountain path covered by snow, to a poor rough home, far away from neighbours. And her rosy cheeks grew pale as night after night she nursed the poor young mother lying there helpless in her dingy room attacked by a malignant disease. Many a night the good Sister had been watching and during the day she had little rest, for her heart was with the poor patient and her babe. The husband had gone to the plains to seek for work when the young wife was taken ill and now word was slow to reach him. Waiting and hoping, patient and nurse prayed for the husband's return.

Weeks went by and the young mother grew more feeble. In vain did Sister Marianna try every simple cure she knew. The doctor had given up hope and had left his last instructions. And the priest had done his last office. Sister Marianna was left alone with the mother and the child, all unaided, still to watch and think and labour, with what little strength she had.

Two days more the patient lay sleeping and Sister Marianna watched beside the bed saying prayers to help the soul departing and rocking the baby in her lap. Then something stirred within her heart. And she spake with eyes dilated and her soul in every word, as to one she saw before her—"Thou hast been a child, my Lord! Thou hast lain as small and speechless as this infant on my knees, then, oh listen to my plea; Lord, remember for one moment what Thy Mother was to Thee! Oh, for love of Thine Own Mother, save the the mother of this child!"

Then she paused and waited breathless, for she knew and felt that the Lord was there in the room listening to her passionate appeal. And she bowed her head and a strange light came in her eyes for her soul had heard the answer that the young mother would not die. Yes, the prayer of faith has saved the mother. The change began that day.

And now night came, a lonely night. And the wind and rain beat against the door and window. And Marianna, faint and weary with the strain of many days, lighted a fire on hearth, for the poor woman she cared for would need to eat before morning. So she prepared a dish that would strengthen the patient, a dish made of food brought from the convent. The food had to be prepared with care, so Marianna planned to do her best. But oh, she was so weary for want of sleep and rest. "Now, Lord, help me this night's labour to complete," said the Sister. And she placed the broth upon the fire stirring it to keep it from burning. But so sleepy was the poor Sister that the spoon kept falling from her hand. Then again she would rouse herself and struggle bravely to drive off the languor. Fear filled her heart that she might faint from fatigue and no neighbours were near and the storm was raging outside. Her head ached strangely as it never did before. "Oh good Lord, only help me through the night that my eyes may not close till the mother and babe are safe. She is better but a torch may turn the scale. To-morrow I can send for help, but this night they depend on me. Lord, grant that I may not fail them."

But her pleading was in vain. For sleep had conquered and her prayer died away in a faint murmur. And she slept the sleep of the weary, unconscious of how the hours sped on. Her head reclining against the wall, the firelight flared and flickered on her pale and peaceful face. And the broth was on the fire all unattended.

Had the Lord not heard her prayer? So earnestly she had pleaded for just a little more strength. Oh, the Lord has many ways to send answers to prayers,—ways that His children think not of.

A long time she sat there sleeping in front of the fire. But the fire-wood kept burning and the pot boiled gently. And when suddenly, with a sense of guilt, at last the Sister awoke, a strange and sweet vision greeted her eyes. At her feet, near the fire, stood a child watching the boiling pot and keeping the fire alive. And when the child turned his face towards her and smiled, she knew that it was the Holy Child. It was the Lord who stood before her, the Child Jesus. When her willing hands had failed, when her weary eyes were closed, He had finished all she had failed in,

He had watched while she rested. Sister Marianna did not shrink nor start, for her faithful heart was filled with joy.

And when afterwards curious lips would ask the Sister how the Child looked, all she would say was: "I knew it was He, my heart melted and you will also know when you meet Him."

With that one sweet look and smile the Child passed away from her vision. But the peace it left in her heart lasted till her dying hour. The storm had ceased and the morning star was shining through the window. And when later the sun was rising and Sister Marianna looked out and softly opened the door to let in the morning breeze, she saw through the trees a moving form. It was the husband returning home. Thank God! He came at last. All night long he had been walking in the darkness and the rain. And when his eyes questioned Marianna, her answer was: "God has helped us, the danger is over." And leaving joy behind her in that home of many tears Marianna returned to the convent. There was music in her heart. And gathering a few flowers on her way, she placed them lovingly on the little shelf before the Holy Mother and her Child.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA:

(Continued from page 116.)

यज्ञिन्यते प्रयतपाणिभिरध्वराद्गौ
ऋद्या निरुक्तविधिनेण हृषिगृहीत्वा ।

अप्यात्मयोग उत योगिभिरात्ममायां

जिहासुमिः परमयागवतैः परीष्ठः ॥१॥

11. Thy feet, O Lord, which are meditated upon in the prescribed manner in the sacrificial fire¹ by priests taking oblations with folded palms, and by Yogis desirous to know Thy Maya—through spiritual union; and which are worshipped all around by the highest devotees²!

[¹ *Sacrificial fire &c.*—The god of whom they think while offering the oblation is not distinct from Brahman.

² *Highest devotees*—who look upon the whole universe as Brahman.]

पर्युक्तया तव विमो वनमालयेऽं
संस्पर्जिनी भगवती प्रतिपादिवच्छाः ।
वः सुप्रदीप्तमनुयाहं गमादभ्रो

भूयात्सदाक्षिण्याद्यभावयधूमकेतुः ॥१२॥

12. O Omnipresent Lord, the Goddess Lakshmi is jealous¹—as from a co-wife—of thy garland of wild flowers, even though withered; Thou dost accept the worship done with this (garland) as duly offered.² 'Oh, may Thy feet ever be the fire to consume our evil desires!

[¹ *Jealous &c.*—The garland also hangs on the Lord's breast, a place reserved for His Divine Spouse, Lakshmi.

² *Duly offered:* The Lord makes much of even the humblest offerings of His devotees—this is the idea.]

केतुखिकमयुतस्तिपतत्पताको
यस्ते भयाभयकरोऽसुरदेवचम्बोः ।
स्वर्गाय साधुषु खलेष्वितराय भूमन्
पादः पुनातु भगवन्भजतामधं नः ॥१३॥

13. O Infinite, O Lord, may Thy feet rectify the sins of us, Thy devotees,—the feet which with its three steps¹ became 'Thy banner,'² as it were, with the Ganges³ flowing in three regions as its pennon; which caused fear and fearlessness to the armies of the Asuras and the Devas respectively; which conduce to heaven in the case of the good, and to hell⁴ in that of the wicked!

[¹ *Three steps. &c.*—The reference is to the Vámana or 'Dwarf' Incarnation of the Lord, in which He for the sake of Indra begged of Bali, the Asura usurper of heaven, as much earth as would be covered by His three steps. The king consenting, the Lord assumed a mighty form, one step of His covering the earth and the second the heaven, while there was no space for the third, whereupon Bali—whose name is a household word in India for generosity—offered his head for this purpose and was asked by the Lord to go and live in the nether regions.

² *Banner*—because they proclaim His glory.

³ *Ganges &c.*—The Ganges is believed to have sprung from Sri Vishnu's feet, and to flow through heaven, earth and the nether regions under the names of Mandakini, Bhágirathi and Bhogavati.

⁴ *Hell &c.*—because they commit outrages in defiance of the eternal moral principles and are degraded thereby.]

नस्योत्तगाव इव यस्य वरे भवन्ति
ब्रह्मादयस्तनुभूतो मिथुरर्थमानाः ।
साक्षस्य ते प्रकृतिपूरुषयोः परस्य
यं नस्तनोतु चरणः पुरुषोत्तमस्य ॥१४॥

14. May Thy feet contribute to our welfare! Thou art the Supreme Being, Thou art Time, beyond Prakriti and Purusha,¹ under whose sway² are Brahman and all other embodied beings—who fight mutually—like unto bullocks with strings passing through their noses!

[¹ *Prakriti and Purusha*—Sankhyan phraseology. The Prakriti corresponds with certain vital differences to the Avyakta of Vedanta, and the Purusha to the Jiva or individual aspect of the Soul; and Brahman is of course beyond all relative aspects.

² *Sway etc.*—because Brahman is disembodied Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute.]

(To be continued.)

REPORTS AND APPEALS

Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur, for the year 1920.

The work of the Dispensary has been steadily and rapidly growing. While in 1913 the total number of patients treated was only 1000, in the year under report the number rose to 12514 of which 3872 represented new cases and the rest repeated ones. The careful treatment of the patients by the workers of the Mission, supplemented, as it is, by the expert advice of several experienced and skilful medical men in complicated cases, has made this Charitable Dispensary better known to the surrounding places than before.

When necessary, patients are treated in their homes and arrangements are also made for the supply of proper diet in case of need. For these

years the popularity and usefulness of the institution are daily increasing and its sphere of activity is extending over an ever-increasing area—viz. Howrah, Salkia, Ghusari, Lillooah, Serampore, Uttarpara, Bally, Belur etc.

We tender our sincere thanks to the Bally municipality for their kind and generous contribution of Rs. 120 per annum since 1917. We anticipate a similar grant in 1921 towards the support of this institution which ministers chiefly to the rate-payers of the above municipality. Our best thanks are also due to the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works Ltd., Calcutta, the Indian Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, as also to many chemists and Kavirajas who helped us with medicines etc.

Our special thanks are due to Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co., Calcutta, whose generous assistance ungrudgingly given, has been of the utmost help to us; they supplied the greater part of our annual stock of medicines free of cost and sometimes even articles of diet for poor patients also free of charge. It is needless to say that the help received from the above firm was found doubly valuable in these hard times. May the lord bless them and other helpers for their disinterested charity!

We beg to express our indebtedness to Drs. Bipin Behari Ghosh, M. B., J. M. Kanjilal M. B., Durga Pada Ghose M. B., and Shyama Pada Mukerjee M. B., all of Calcutta and to Drs. Kshitish Chandra Banerjee M. B. and Hari Charan Banerjee (Homeopath) of Bally and Barrackpur respectively, for their help and valuable advice in difficult and complicated cases.

The total receipts of the Charitable Dispensary during the year amounted to the sum of Rs. 500-7-6 and the total expenditure to Rs. 167-9-0.

As it is a philanthropic institution and affords help to all alike without distinction of caste or creed, a sympathetic response from our generous countrymen is expected, so that the Institution may prove a real refuge for the sick and the poor. All contributions in the shape of money and medical necessaries are accepted and acknowledged most thankfully by (1) The President, R. K. Mission, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah. (2) The Secretary, R. K. Mission, Udbodhan Office, 1. Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

An Appeal

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, is constructing an extension of their present buildings to accommodate the increasing number of patients seeking relief in the institution. On account of the rise in the prices of building materials and labour, the funds collected for the purpose is exhausted, and in apprehension of a further rise, it is thought imperative to finish the construction as soon as possible. The plan of the outdoor dispensary in contemplation includes ten rooms and one verandah: one dressing room, one operation room, one sterilising room, one Doctor's room, a waiting room for male patients, one waiting room for female patients, one dispensing room for males, one room for stocking medicines, one dispensing room for females, one lumber room for keeping bottles and other medical accessories. The cost for the nine rooms is estimated at the rate of Rs. 1500 for each; the operation room which will have marble floor and extensive skylights, is estimated to cost Rs. 3500. The total estimate for all the rooms is Rs. 17000; of which the sum of Rs. 7000 has been collected and the balance of Rs. 10000 is now urgently needed. For want of money, the construction has stopped at the plinth-work. Last year the number of outdoor patients amounted to over twenty thousand, and the present dispensary buildings with only two small dispensing rooms and no dressing and operation room, is quite insufficient to meet the demands of the situation. The above estimate given, is approximate as it is not possible to be sure of the prices of materials and labour which are fluctuating from time to time. The Secretary appeals to the generous public to realise the needs of suffering humanity and come to their aid by contributing to complete the construction of the above works and thus help the Sevashrama to render relief and succour to the distressed. Persons desirous to perpetuate the memory of their dear relatives by constructing rooms bearing memorial tablets may contribute Rs. 1500 for any one of the nine rooms or Rs. 3500 for the operation room.

All contributions may be sent to—Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., The R. K. Mission Sevashrama, P. O. Kankhal, Via Hardwar, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS.

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NEW BUILDINGS.

On the 10th of May, the auspicious Akshaya-Tritiya day, were opened the new buildings of the Ramakrishna Students' Home, a magnificent edifice erected on the Sullivan's Gardens Road, Mylapore. The Institution, which is a unique one in Southern India and has in the past played a very important part in the cause of the education of the poor, and of moulding the character of the youths in right direction, has a prospect of still more useful work in the future. The function of the dedication was itself imposing and inspiring. The procession with the picture of Sri Ramakrishna and the Salagrama Sila used for worship in the Home, started from the present habitation on the Cutchery Road, Mylapore, with the usual temple paraphernalia, music, chanting of the Vedas and Bhajana. It passed through the principal streets of Mylapore round the temple and reached the new place at exactly 9 a.m. The procession was headed by Swami Sharvananda, the President of the Committee of the Home and the presiding member of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch at Madras. His Serene Holiness Sri Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Mission, and Sri Swami Shivananda, the Vice-President, joined the party very near the new buildings. Swami Nirmalananda, the head of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Branch at Bangalore specially came for the function and accompanied the procession. Under shouts of "Sri Guru Maharajji ki Jai," Sri Swami Brahmananda first placed his foot in the buildings and blessed them. As soon as the whole party entered the library hall the Sanskrit verses in praise of Sri Ramakrishna composed by Swami Vivekananda were chanted in chorus by the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Math. Then followed 'puja' and 'homa' performed by Swami Sharvananda, to purify the place. There was a large and respectable gathering. In the evening there was a Ramanama Sankirtan party at which devotional songs were sung by the Sannyasins. Mr. Viswanatha Aiyar of Kumbakonam contributed to the enjoyment of the party by singing some of the

famous Kirtanams of the devotees of Southern India.

HISTORY OF THE HOME.

A short history of the Home will be a useful adjunct to the report of this day's proceedings. The Home was started in 1905 by His Holiness Swami Ramakrishnananda, one of the devout and direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, who had been preaching the gospel of his Master in this Presidency incessantly for about fourteen years. Starting practically as an orphanage, the Home has grown into an institution giving free boarding and lodging to the absolutely indigent but promising students studying in the colleges and schools in the city of Madras. It is open to all classes of Hindus. A prominent feature of the institution is the attention that is being paid to the development of character of the boys and to their religious instruction in right lines, with unusual opportunities for coming under the direct and sole influence of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Marriage is a disqualification for admission and continuance in the Home. Quite satisfactory progress of the student in studies is an essential condition of his retention in it. The Home, during its progress, has been visited by many of the prominent men of Southern India and its work has been uniformly applauded. The boys are trained in the actual management of the Home. Much of the correspondence and accounts of the Home is looked after by the boys themselves. Self-reliance and dignity of labour are prominently brought home to the students while they remain as inmates.

THE NEW BUILDINGS.

The Home had been located in a rented building which was obviously found unsuited to its growing needs. Impelled by the successful working of the past fourteen years, the authorities of the Home drew up a scheme for building a permanent habitation for the institution. In this they were assisted at the initial stage by the substantial help of a generous friend who made a free gift of 15 grounds of valuable land which forms now the major portion of the site on which the new buildings stand. The main structure is a two-storied building in the form of the letter 'E,' the central arm forming the library and reading-room on the ground-floor and a prayer hall on the first floor. The prayer hall is

still in an unfinished condition, the floor alone remaining to be laid. The hall is designed purposefully on a grand scale to suit the purpose for which it is intended. The walls and ceiling are in perfect white with glossy appearance, the large doors and door-ways being richly carved. The western end of the hall carries a magnificently carved canopy to accommodate a marble statue of Saraswati which is being worked by Mr. Nagappan, the Sculptor of Madras. The other portions of the main buildings consist of the warden's room, an office and 36 rooms, each accommodating three students. Most of these rooms have been built by individual donors.

The kitchen block, lies exactly west of the main buildings and is separated from them by a neatly laid-out Puja-flower garden. It consists of a central kitchen and store room with large adjoining dining rooms on either side, one intended for Brahmins and the other for non-Brahmins. Behind the kitchen block is a cluster of small buildings which provide necessary bathing arrangements for the large number of boys that will be accommodated in the Home. For bathing and washing purposes, the water of the well dug in the compound is utilised. This water being pumped by means of electric motor, is stored in two elevated large iron tanks and drawn for use therefrom by a system of pipes laid in the bathing place. This special arrangement has been designed with the sole object of effecting economy in recurring water charges, payable to the municipality if the institution were to use municipal water for all its needs. The medical ward, stores and other out-houses have yet to be erected. The want of these did not stand in the way of using the buildings at present. The rooms are also furnished and the building has been fitted with electric lights. Each student has been provided with a stool, a small table and a shelf to keep his books and also with a small bedding consisting of a mat, a pillow and a bed-sheet. The estimate for the building scheme amounts to a lakh and eight thousand rupees. The Madras Government have been graciously pleased to pay half the cost.

To the south of the site on which the buildings stand, a plot of two acres of land has been acquired at a cost of about Rs. 30,000 for the purpose of providing a play-ground for the stu-

dents and preventing the growing up of dwelling quarters close to the Home.

MAINTENANCE.

The Home is maintained by voluntary contributions and donations which amounted in 1920 to Rs. 6,012 and were contributed by 320 persons. The amount ranged from annas 4 to Rs. 204. It is the endeavour of the authorities of the Home, hereafter, to found the endowments necessary for the upkeep of the large number of the students that will eventually be accommodated in the new buildings. So far the Home has been able to secure endowments to the extent of Rs. 48,993.

The authorities of the Home are contemplating the early starting of a technical institute to be attached to the institution, so that the promising students who show a leaning towards the technical line may be given adequate training to fit them up as useful mechanics or future managers of industrial concerns."

The authorities of the Home are to be congratulated on the excellent work that has been accomplished. Much yet remains to be done to carry out the programme they have in view. We wish them and the institution every success.

REVIEW.

The Heart of the Bhagavad-Gita. By Pandit Lingesh Mahabhangavat of Kurtkoti, Ph. D., now His Holiness Sankaracharya of Kavir and Sankeshwar. Published by Professor A. G. Widgery, The College, Baroda. Pp. 230 + LIII. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 2-4.

The structures of those religions that are built on the teachings of some great personages are in the danger of receiving shocks so rude that they may tend to collapse and with them also the faith of their followers, if the historicity of their founders or the authenticity of the Scriptures that are said to embody their teachings is called in question. But Hinduism enjoys the great advantage that it stands on the bed-rock of eternal principles and is not founded on the personality of any particular teacher. There are no doubt the Avatars, the Rishis, the Acharyas and other great personalities but they receive respect and worship as embodiments of the principles, as preachers of

Truth that is not affected by time, space and causation.

Hinduism is thus founded on a securet basis. Even if the personality of Sri Krishna who preached the inspiring Message of the Song Celestial is demonstrated to be a mere myth, and the historicity of Veda Vyasa to whom the authorship of the Gita is attributed is proved to be false, the wonderful teachings of the Gita which contains the essence of the Upanishads, do by no means lose their value on that account. The historical researches and the so-called higher criticisms, however unfavourable they may be, cannot at all touch the soul of religion.

The author of the volume under review has very wisely avoided all discussions of a doubtful value, and with great success has been able to represent truly 'the heart of the Bhagavad-Gita.' "If reason vouchsafes," he says, "the truths and if conscience approves of the ethics, we shall accept them and not otherwise." Indeed a broad outlook is absolutely necessary to understand and explain the liberal spirit that breathes through the whole of the book. "If Krishna were to teach a modern world, we should not be surprised to hear him include the Dhammapada, the Bible, the Koran and the Zendevesta among sacred books, and Buddha, Jesus, Mahammad and Zoroaster among persons to be revered as manifestations (of God)"—so writes the learned author.

The Gita is to be regarded as a philosophy of Brahman and a science of Yoga. "Its object is to show how the highest Védantic truths are at the same time the simplest of all, how everyone of them can be applied and is meant to be so applied to the very practical work-a-day world and how religion means no more than philosophy applied to everyday life."

Various writers have tried to explain the Gita in different ways. Some think that in it Jnana-yoga is extolled, some identify it with Dhyana-yoga, others see in it an endeavour to exalt the Bhakti-yoga, others again say that it is a Karma-yoga Shastra, and so on. The learned author maintains, and that very rightly, that "no sectarian can claim the special sanction of the Gita in his favour. Knowledge, work, love and concentration are all here commended but none at the expense of the other." "Each of these four Yogas lead to

equanimity, 'the real Yoga and thus to the realisation of Brahmati.' His thoughts on the relation between the Bhakti-yoga and the Jnana-yoga are very illuminating—"When a Jnana-yogin attains to that ripe condition of knowledge called 'Jnana-nishta' or firm adherence to knowledge, his realisation becomes absolutely indistinguishable from Para-Bhakti." He has also very ably refuted the misinterpretations of the Gita and repudiated baseless charges made by the Christian missionaries, the ignorance of the majority of whom about the true spirit of the Hindu Shastras is equalled only by their zeal to establish the superiority of their own Scriptures and culture.

The book under review was accepted by the Oriental University of Washington, U. S. A., as a thesis for the degree of Ph. D. It has since been included in the Gaekwad Studies of Religion and Philosophy and forms the third book of the Series. We hope it will prove to be of great help to those who want to acquaint themselves with the real "Heart of the Bhagavad-Gita."

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE following is the report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P. O., Dt. Saharanpur, for the period from Dec. '20 to April, '21 :—

Indoor patients :—There were 2 old and 69 newly admitted patients of whom 56 were discharged cured, 9 died, 1 left treatment and 4 were still under treatment. Outdoor patients :—The total number of cases were 10956, of which 4919 were new and 6037 repeated cases.

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THE Thrice Blessed Day of the life of Lord Buddha was observed by the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta, with 'Puja,' 'Bhoga' and 'Arati' on the Vaisakhi Purnima day in the Society premises, and was celebrated in a public meeting held on Saturday, the 28th May, in the hall of the Bengal Theosophical Society. Rai Bahadur Dr. Choud-

Lal Bose, Sheriff of Calcutta, presided. Babu Kiran Chandra Dutt, the Hon'ble Secretary, welcomed the respectable audience in a nice little speech explaining the significance of holding such an anniversary. After the recitation of the "Jaya Mangala Gatha" by the Buddhist monks, the chairman delivered a short but impressive speech, in which he said that this anniversary of the Birth, Enlightenment and Mahaparinirvana of the Lord Buddha should be observed by the Hindus and Buddhists alike, and the Vivekananda Society, a non-sectarian religious association had set an example by holding such anniversaries of the different prophets of the world. Speeches were delivered by several speakers on the Life and Teachings of Lord Buddha from different standpoints. Revd. Anagarika Dharmapala's pamphlet on 'Buddhism in its Relationship with Hinduism' was distributed.

The eleventh anniversary of the Sri Ramakrishna Samaj, Cuddapah and the Birthdays of Sri Sankara, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated on the 12th May by the members of the Sri Ramakrishna Samaj. The programme for the day began with Archana and Abhisheka in the temples of Sri Visvesvara and Sri Aujanya at exactly 6 a.m. In the evening a public meeting was held. The Secretary read the annual report, giving a very good account of the activities of the Samaj during the past year. This being over, Mr. K. Raghunatha Acharya, B.A., Joint Secretary of the Samaj, read his paper on "Vivekananda and Hinduism," which was much appreciated by all.

SRI Ramakrishna Girls' School which was established some fifteen years ago under the inspiration of His Holiness the late Swami Ramakrishnandaaji and was hitherto under a private management, has now been handed over to the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras Branch. Efforts are being made to develop it into an ideal institution.

THE President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, begs to acknowledge with hearty thanks the following kind donations to the Ashrama: - J. S. Pinto Esq., Blantyre, Rs. 75; C. K. Iyer Esq., Rs. 25 (through Mr. R. Koyaji).

The Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has sent the following communication to the Press:—

The public is hereby informed that the contributions to the R. K. Mission Relief Fund during famine and flood in Bengal and Orissa in the year 1921 amounted to Rs. 23945-11-9 and that a part of that amount was intended by some of the donors to be entirely spent in Midnapur Dist. Of the above sum Rs. 14604-3-0 were spent in relieving the distress of the suffering people of the affected areas in Kanas, Gorisagoda and Bhubaneswar of Puri Dt., Jenapur of Cuttack Dist., and Ghatal and Tamluk of Midnapur Dist. The balance of Rs. 9341-8-9 was proposed to be spent on the poor cultivators of the affected areas in the Midnapur Dist. during the cultivation period in March and April last in the shape of seed distribution. A local enquiry was made for the purpose in April last and it was found that the cultivators of the Midnapur Dist. had secured necessary seed grains for their use and that help at that period was unnecessary. While the Mission authorities were considering about spending the amount in that district on some future occasions when necessity would arise, the news of the sorrowful plight of the Assam Tea Garden Coolies and of the great distress due to scarcity of food grains existing in Khulna Dist. reached them through the columns of the newspapers and through the direct appeal of the Khulna Famine Relief Committee, of which S. P. C. Roy is the President. The Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission has therefore thought it prudent to utilise the aforesaid balance in favour of these distressed people whose condition demand immediate help. The Governing Body of R. K. Mission hopes that its decision will meet the approval of the donors of the aforesaid amount as well as of the general public.

The Mission has deputed a band of workers to Chandpur for Coolie Distress Relief with instructions to halt at Goalundo and to give necessary relief to the needy. At Goalundo 450 coolies were given pecuniary help and despatched to Nathali. The workers then left for Chandpur where they have been daily distributing 15 mds of rice, 2 mds. of Dal and necessary salt to the coolies.

(Sd.) Swami Saradanand,
The R. K. Mission Branch, 1 Mukherji Lane,
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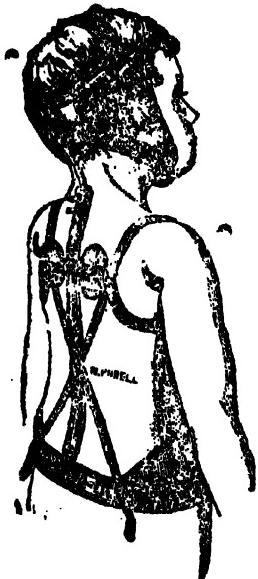
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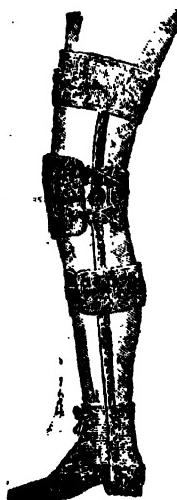
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Katha Upanishad, I, vii, 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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[No. 309

THE GREATNESS OF THE INDIAN MASSES.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

LET New India arise—out of the peasant's cottage holding the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains. The common people have suffered oppressions for thousands of years—suffered them without a murmur, and as a result have got wonderful fortitude. They have suffered eternal misery, which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of oatmeal they can convulse the world; give them only half a piece of bread, and the whole world will not be big enough to contain their energy;

they are endowed with the inexhaustible vitality of a Rakta-bija.† And besides, they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such peacefulness, such contentment, such love, such power of silent and incessant work and such manifestation of lion's strength in times of action—where else will you find these?

* * * *

Those uncared-for lower classes of India—the peasants, the weavers and the rest, who are slighted by foreign nations and looked down upon by their own people—it is they who from time immemorial have been working silently, without even getting the remuneration of

* Written en route to the West to a brother-disciple.

† A powerful demon mentioned in the Durga-Saptasati, every drop of whose blood produced another demon like him.

their labours! But how great changes are taking place slowly, all over the world in pursuance of Nature's laws! Countries, civilisations and supremacy are undergoing revolutions. Ye labouring classes of India, as a result of your silent, constant labours Babylon, Persia, Alexandria, Greece, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Baghdad, Samarkand, Spain, Portugal, France, Denmark, Holland and England have successively attained supremacy and eminence! And you?—well, who cares to think of you!

My dear Swami, your ancestors wrote a few philosophical works, penned a dozen or so of Epics or built a number of temples—that is all, and you rend the skies with triumphal shouts; while those whose heart's blood has contributed to all the progress that has been made in the world—well, who cares to praise them? The world-conquering heroes of

spirituality, war and poetry are under the eyes of all and they receive the homage of mankind; but where nobody looks, no one gives a word of encouragement, where everybody hates—that amid such circumstances, displaying boundless patience, infinite love, and dauntless practicality, our proletariat are doing their duty in their honest day and night, without the slightest murmur—well, is there no heroism in this?

Many turn out to be heroes when they have got some great task to perform. Even a coward easily gives up his life, and the most selfish man behaves disinterestedly, when there is a multitude to cheer them on; but blessed indeed is he who manifests the same unselfishness and devotion to duty in the smallest of acts, unnoticed by any—and it is you who are actually doing this, ye ever-trampled labouring classes of India! I bow to you,

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

WHATEVER may be the origin of the caste system it exists all over the world in some form or other, whether the main divisions of human society into the priest, the military, the merchant and the labourer are based on occupation or heredity or both. The evidence of history proves beyond the shade of a doubt that however crystallised a form the Indo-Aryan society might have assumed even at a very distant age, fresh ethnic groups were from time to time admitted and fused into the body of each of the different castes. Even the Brahmins in spite of their high pretensions to the purity of blood were not immune from such a fusion, as innumerable are the

instances of the importation of new blood into even those who occupy the highest rung of the great institution of caste. However great might have been the precautions taken to preserve the blood-purity by the enforcement of the rules of eating, drinking and marriage, the men who gaining ingress into the fold of Hinduism settled down at first as sub-castes, were and still are gradually mixing up with the main body of the several castes. A critical examination into the root-cause of the pride of birth will bring about a disillusionment which may go a long way to lead to a better understanding and unity of the various divisions and sub-divisions of the Hindu society. That

the glorious social institution of the *Varnâshrama-dharma* based as it was meant to be on culture, has been the source of manifold good and prosperity of the Hindus, is an undeniable fact. But its present fossilised state with its encrustations of ignorance and superstition, with its inequitable doctrines of don't-touchism and differences of privileges, has been the veritable source of discontent and disunion among the members. And unless thoroughly reformed it may in the end bring about the downfall of the entire society, thus jeopardising the very object for which the system was brought into existence.

The intercaste quarrels so rampant in Southern India or the feeling of resentment and even hatred which now and then finds expression among the depressed or rather the suppressed classes in different parts of the country, may, if the cause of friction be not eradicated at the initial stage, assume huge proportions and bring about an undesirable revolution from which it would be difficult for the society to recover. The awakening of the masses, the oppressed and the down-trodden in India and their gradual realisation of their real position and power in the society, that they are the most indispensable factor that contributes to the prosperity of those who enrich themselves by their labour, are facts which the higher and privileged classes should no longer neglect without very serious risk to their own interest and safety.

Grave is the danger that confronts the whole human society. The spirit of democracy and freedom, often taking the extreme forms of communism, socialism, anarchism etc., is permeating even the

very lowest strata of all societies. The formation of labour and other unions, the organisation of widespread strikes that have become quite common even among the mild Indians at home and abroad, the gigantic struggles and fights unto death of the proletariat of all countries are quite significant of the fact that the sleeping Leviathan when awakened can never be kept under check by any power on earth, however strong it may be. Everywhere the non-privileged classes are demanding back their forfeited rights. Even the Negroes who are equipping themselves with education, general and scientific and are developing their lost communal consciousness, have already commenced to demand freedom of the sort the white races enjoy and are contemplating to establish a United States of Africa which they claim as their native land just as the English claim England or the Americans the United States as their native habitat. This and similar instances go to show unmistakably the tendency of the age, and the rich and the powerful of our land should take advantage of and profit by the events that are taking place in other parts of the world.

Everything in this world is subject to change. In the domain of religion even Gods and Goddesses rise and fall in succession. The Vedic Gods Mitra, Varuna, Agni etc. once universally worshipped by the Aryans no longer receive the same respect and oblations as of old; and have been practically dethroned by the Puranic Deities, although no doubt the spirit of worship remains practically unchanged. Similarly in the political and economic world, in the struggle for supremacy among the upper classes, one after another gained ascendancy but it fell to the

lot of the lowest strata of the society, the labouring classes and the poor agriculturists, who form the real source of the power of the priest, the ruler and the capitalist, to serve and suffer uniformly all the time.

But the masses are awaking and have already given clear indications of the tremendous energy that is locked up within them, which if not controlled and properly directed may sweep away everything before it. However, in India there is one advantage. The common people have not yet been fully conscious of the wrongs and injury done to them by social and other forms of tyranny. And in case the highest classes, at least to safeguard their own interests, even if no higher motive can move them, now try to devise means for the solution of the most serious problem of food and save them from the throes of chronic scarcity and disease, attempt to elevate them by enlightening their mind by the light of knowledge, and help them to realise their divine nature by imparting to them the great spiritual truths discovered by the Rishis, which have become practically the monopoly of the minority—thus nourishing their body, mind and soul—their sense of gratitude for the sympathy and help received in hours of great need will remove altogether the chance of future friction and conflict. Thus alone can the upper classes save themselves and the country from the terrible revolutions that are threatening the peace and prosperity of the land. And this is the only way following which the rich and the bourgeois who have brought about their own degeneration in their thoughtless attempt to suppress the lower classes, may hope to avoid the dictatorship of the proletariat and its accompanying evils.

The main cause of the misery in India is the utter neglect of the education of the masses. So great has been their struggle for existence and so keen the competition which modern civilisation has brought into existence that it has been practically impossible for the poor to turn their attention to the problem of education. But it is the duty of those who profit by their labour, who educate themselves with the money that the people earn by the sweat of their brow and who are really responsible for the ignorance and degradation of the masses, to come forward now to help them, if not from any sense of gratitude or desire to expiate for the wrongs done to them, at least for the sake of their own interest, for without elevating those who form the very backbone of the society, they themselves cannot rise and neither can the nation move along the path of peace and prosperity.

The yawning gulf that separates the upper and the lower classes and the unjust treatment that has been and still is being meted out to the poor and the down-trodden, stand in the way of the nation's union and progress. So long as the great differences in privileges do not cease to exist and equality is not established within her own bounds, to quote the words of the patriot-saint, Swami Vivekananda, "it is a far cry for India to establish relations of equality with foreign nations." And to accomplish this object it is absolutely necessary to get rid of the caste-pride and class-snobbery as also the distinction of privileges and other iniquities, thus helping everyone to obtain the same right to virtue, wealth, enjoyment and liberation. Differences as regards wealth and intellect there are and

will always remain, but the recognition of the underlying solidarity of mankind should so inspire men with the spirit of love and service that clash of interest or struggle for supremacy may altogether be eliminated.

Attempts are made now and then to bring about a breach among the different sections of the Indian people by pressing into service the so-called Aryan-nou-Aryan theory and others manufactured from time to time by not quite uninterested persons, and also by utilising the doctrines of the supererogated claims of certain communities as regards their divine hereditary rights and pre-eminent position in the Hindu society. But all these are matters which will not be able to foment disunion and caste-hatred if we can ourselves realise and also make the people comprehend the underlying unity of all the classes from the Brahmin down to the Pariah—that we are all inseparably connected with one another like the different members of the same body, and each class, nay each individual, has got to perform functions that are not less indispensable and important than those of others to contribute to the well-being of the whole system. And we are all spiritual descendants of the same Rishis and inheritors of the same Aryan culture and civilisation, and though we may be at different stages of evolution and at various degrees of progress, we are all advancing towards the same goal. And above all, whatever may be the apparent distinctions, great or small, we have the same Infinity at our back, nay more, we are all one as Atman where all distinctions cease to exist. It is this glory of the Atman, this doctrine of spiritual equality which is the real basis of true

liberty and fraternity, that will help the people to regain their faith in themselves and develop their lost individuality, thus enabling them to work out their own salvation and along with it that of others as well.

This noble and inspiring message should no longer be shut out from anybody but ought to be carried to the door of all, irrespective of caste, creed, sex and colour, as the Vedas themselves declare:—

ब्रह्मां वाचं कल्याणामावदानि जनन्यः ब्राह्मणान्वान्याभ्यं
गृहाय चार्याय च स्वाय चारणाय च, प्रियो देवानां दक्षिण
वे दानुषिः भूत्यसमयं मे कामः समृद्ध्यनामुपमाणे नमतु ।

"I have revealed the ways leading to the welfare of all people: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Sudras and even *ati-Sudras*. Therefore regard no one as unequal among yourselves, but try to be loved by all wise people, distribute gifts among all and always desire the well-being of all."—Yajurveda.

HINDI AS THE LINGUA FRANCA FOR INDIA.

NOw-a-days there is a great talk about popularising the Hindi language, and trying to make it the *lingua franca* for India, in which people of the different provinces may interchange their thoughts. The need of such a medium of inter-provincial expression has long been felt, and various Indian vernaculars have been put forward as being the fittest to serve this purpose. A common script also is being thought upon. In these days of all-India activities, the necessity of such a common medium of expression is all the more poignant, and the sooner some language is mutually accepted as such and

widely propagated, the better it is for Indian aspirations to be fulfilled.

In our opinion, a consideration of the pros and cons of the subject will enable us to give a verdict in favour of Hindi. Mahatma Gandhi also has lent the weight of his authority on the side of Hindi, and under his inspiration already an effort is being made to teach and popularise the language in the different provinces of India, even in the Madras Presidency, where such instruction is the greatest desideratum. Let us briefly discuss the points.

In any language sought to be used as a medium of communication among people whose vernaculars are different, we should first consider which language will entail the least trouble on those taking it up as a second language. An examination of the statistics will suffice to show that if there be in India any language which can claim to be more or less known in almost every province, it is certainty Hindi. From Behar to the Punjab it is well known; in the Bombay Presidency, Mysore, Central India, Hyderabad, Orissa and Bengal Hindi is cursorily understood; and even in the remote parts of the Madras Presidency there will be found a fair sprinkling of Hindi-knowing people. The reason of this is twofold, commercial and religious. In the first place, merchants who have to travel all over the country generally use Hindi as the *lingua franca*, and in the second place, the places of pilgrimage being scattered all over India, pilgrims and Sadhus of the North and the South come in contact with one another, and instinctively they also try to express themselves in broken Hindi. This latter phenomenon is probably due to a tacit recognition of the two essential points in favour of this language, viz., the preponderance of Sans-

kritic words in it and its occupying a middle place, so to speak, between Bengali in the far east and Marathi on the far west. Whatever may be the cause, there is no denying the fact that in talking of a common medium of expression, Hindi to-day holds the palm in point of currency—it is the *lingua franca de facto*.

It goes without saying that for any one language to be the common medium, some sacrifice must be undergone by people speaking other languages. Such being the case, the best course is to put the trouble on those who form a minority. The four Southern languages, Telugu, Tamil, Canarese and Malayalam, have the least similarity to Hindi, but of these even, Telugu and Canarese have a fair percentage of Sanskritic words and as such will entail so much the less trouble to pick up Hindi.

Hindi is written in Devanagari characters, in which Sanskrit also is written. And Sanskrit is well cultivated in the South, so the alphabet of Hindi at any rate will be familiar to a large number of the people in the South. Not so Bengali, or Gujarati even, though each of these may boast of a richer literature than Hindi. Another great point in favour of Hindi is that it is wonderfully phonetic—its words and sentences are written exactly as they are pronounced—a decided advantage over Bengali. In the latter there is a fight going on at present between the spoken and written diction, mostly denoted by verbal forms, leaving out of consideration the confusion of *s* and *sh* sounds, the *b* and *v* sounds, different sounds of the vowel *e* (pronounced as in 'bed' and 'bad'), etc. It may be contended that Marathi also has many advantages. But other considerations such as currency and comparative facility of learning, should prevail

against its being taken up as an all-India language. With its three genders determined arbitrarily, without almost any regard to the sex of the things denoted, Marathi grammar presents a formidable barrier to those whose mother-tongue is different. Experts will be able to adduce other points of difficulty.

Though the study and culture of Sanskrit is of the utmost importance to the regeneration of India as a whole, yet it would be far from prudent to try to introduce it as the compulsory second language for all Indian students, so as to make it the medium of daily communication throughout India. For we cannot conceive that the masses, for example the labourers, of one province going to another in search of employment or any other object, would find it easiest to express themselves through Sanskrit, though Sanskrit will be less troublesome than any foreign language. The study of Sanskrit should be confined to a select class, who should translate into the vernaculars and Hindi the treasures of Sanskrit literature in the widest sense. This will help the propagation of Sanskrit culture among the masses and women, and save them the enormous trouble that the acquisition of an inflected ancient language like Sanskrit is bound to cause.

The poverty of literature and the inadequacy of vocabulary from which the Hindi language suffers, are urged as reasons against its adoption as a common language. But we are apt to lose sight of the fact that we are here discussing the utility of Hindi only as a means of inter-provincial communication, and for this, initial richness of literature and vocabulary is not so essential. The amount of care and attention that will be bestowed on Hindi, should it be seriously taken up

as a common language, is sure to infuse new currents of life into it and by the time the different non-Hindi provinces would acquire a rough sort of command over it, it will, we make bold to say, develop into a rich and powerful language, as efficient as the sister languages like Bengali or Marathi. As already hinted, the comparative simplicity of grammar, and the fullness of its alphabet place Hindi on a far more advantageous position than languages like Tamil, for instance,—the difficulties of mastering which are only known to those who have tried the experiment.

The reader should remember that the vernaculars of the different provinces should continue to be cultivated as heretofore, and Hindi is to be only a second language in communicating with our brothers and sisters of the other provinces. Everyone knows how much youthful energy is wasted in trying to express oneself in schools through the medium of English. In Bengal they have introduced to a certain extent the use of the vernacular for this purpose, and this custom should be made general throughout India, at least in the lower classes of secondary schools. The only difficulty in this is that scientific and technical books, which are now written in English, will have to be translated, or original works on those branches produced, in the vernaculars. This is no easy task, and considering the practical difficulty of getting publishers for such books—for they would seldom care to publish books on highly specialised branches of learning that will have sale over very restricted areas—very few good books would be translated or produced, owing to sheer financial difficulties. There is no doubt that an influx of vernacular scientific text-books, if

somewhat introduced, would highly enrich those languages, but there is the above difficulty, and that is no mean one. To obviate this, if the promoters of education in our country arrange to teach the scientific subjects in the vernacular in the lower classes, and substitute Hindi for it in the upper classes, we think a solution will be found for good scientific text-books. These will be written in *Hindi*, and being used all over India, will have a wide enough circulation, and neither the authors nor the publishers should in that case be under any misgiving as to whether their productions would find a ready market or not. In short, Hindi should replace English in these cases. This is no little saving of labour and money, and we commend this to all national educationists. Carefully prepared terminologies should be compiled in Hindi, and these, when widely approved, can be taken up or adapted into the other vernaculars also. Thus boys will be accustomed to learn them from an early age, and when in the higher classes they will commence to learn the sciences through the medium of Hindi, they will tread a familiar ground. The compilers of these terminologies should consult the existing terminologies of the other vernaculars of India, as well as draw upon Sanskrit, when suitable, and failing this, coin them. Standard religious works also should be translated into Hindi or the vernaculars as the case may be.

In the scheme above proposed we have, then, the vernacular as the main language, and Hindi as the second language. This is meant for general proficiency, suiting those who would only take up business in later life. But those who would go in for special fields of activity should choose, along with those two, some

one or more of the other languages according to necessity. For instance, one who would like to be a priest, should take up Sanskrit in addition; one who would go to foreign countries for studying or preaching, should take up a corresponding additional language, such as English or French (which should occupy the place of additional second languages in some of the schools), and so on. In Japan the custom is that the student learns besides his own tongue perhaps German, if his object pertains to that country, or some other language according to the need. Those who shudder at the abolition of English as a medium of instruction in Indian schools and colleges, should remember that English is of comparatively recent introduction, and that other countries have media different from English. Of course on this language question, as on all other questions, we should eschew all fanaticism, for where the necessity of the situation would clearly dictate the use of English as the unavoidable medium of communication, we should unhesitatingly make room for it, as in the councils and upper courts at present, where contact with non-Indians is a matter of necessity,—till at some future time the *lingua franca*—Hindi, in our argument—can be introduced there also. So long as some one language is not universally acknowledged as such a medium, it is impossible for foreigners to address the Indians at large on great public occasions in any vernacular tongue. We need not dilate on this obvious fact.

But to make Hindi popular all over India, a good deal of preparation will be needed. In each province, at least in the principal towns, facilities should be given for learning Hindi. A large number of schools should arrange for it as a second

language, and where there are several schools in the same town, the facility of teaching Hindi should be made an attraction for boys, and the force of competition will soon introduce Hindi in all the schools there. Where there are no schools with a Hindi staff, good books should take the place of teachers. All that is needed for this is the compilation of a Word-book (*Vernacular-Hindi*), an elementary differential Vernacular-Hindi grammar, and a good cheap dictionary, preferably Hindi-Vernacular, or in the absence of it, Hindi-English even, for the present. The Hindi-Vernacular dictionaries need not present such difficulties to the publishers as the vernacular science text-books, for they will command a far wider circle of readers. By the bye, the Word-book (of course, Bengali-English hitherto), so much in vogue in Bengal, is seldom met with in the other provinces of India, and this proves a serious bar to an inhabitant of one province wishing to learn the vernacular of another. One press at Bankipur has published a polyglot Word-book, containing, we think, equivalents of four or five languages, including English. This method, though in a way advantageous to the publisher by bringing the book within the reach of more numerous readers, is certainly a disadvantage to the customer, for it is bound to be needlessly expensive. By a 'differential grammar' we have meant one that will set forth the differences of grammatical points, from pronunciation to Idiom. The Yegashrama of Bestares published a tiny Bengali-Hindi grammar of this kind (now probably out of print), and its value to the Bengalee learner of Hindi cannot be over-estimated. The example should be followed in every province.

There is now-a-days a movement set

afoot to ensure the purity of the Hindi language; which means the wholesale banishing of Urdu and such other words. But care should be taken in this to see that the craze for purity does not degenerate into partitanship. While a judicious pruning of unnecessary and unfamiliar words of foreign origin may do good, a reckless ostracism of useful current Urdu or Persian words, simply on the plea that they are of non-Hindi origin, is sure to enfeeble the very language whose purity it is sought to establish. Times are changing, and with them new thought-currents and new modes of expression are coming into use. But, if instead of allowing a judicious room for them, an effort is made to clear them out bag and baggage,—the result is bound to be disastrous. Attempts, for instance, to substitute in Bengali bombastic Sanskrit words for the common equivalents of pen and inkpot, or table and chair, will simply be ridiculous. Just as the Aryan blood has had various admixtures through the lapse of time, and it would be silly now to demarcate which families are truly Aryan and which not, so in language also many words and expressions of foreign origin have been incorporated, and to trim them indiscriminately for the sake of so-called purity would mean a serious damage to the parent stock.

Some defects in the present system of education have crept into the very vitals of the Hindi language. One would almost search in vain, for example, for a small Geography of the World, and all that he can get in the market is a Geography of the District, Province or at best of India. Why, is there no need for young boys to have a bird's-eye view of the whole world? No time should be lost in making up such defects, for they really hamper the mental growth of the child.

Information bureaus should be established in the principal cities for acquainting the public from time to time with the latest developments of the Hindi literature. Newspapers and magazines should bring into prominence such interesting items of news as will benefit the Hindi-learning students of other provinces. The central office of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan may report its activities from time to time in the newspapers or furnish the desired information to eager correspondents, who at present hardly know where to address themselves.

In conclusion, it is our belief that the votaries of Hindi will be able to impress the importance of this language upon the Indian public only by supplying increased facilities to them for learning it and steadily co-operating to enrich the language so as to make it worthy of the high place of honour that it is destined to occupy in future.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA.

MATERIALISM.

MATERIALISM represents the revolt of the research-spirit of man against ancient dogmatic cosmogonies. It reaches a plausible scientific unity by conceiving the world, organic and inorganic, as the outcome of a single principle, viz. matter. Here we shall give a brief sketch of the growth of Materialism mainly in the West and show how it is a failure.

Materialism, in the true sense of the term, begins with the Greek Atomists, Leucippus and Democritus. The world is a conglomeration of atoms, say the Atomists. Alike in quality but unlike in quantity, extended but indivisible, the atoms are self-existent, simple, impenetrable and indestructible units of matter. To receive them as atoms some-

thing of the nature of a vacuum is necessary. It is empty space. Given empty space the atoms, by their various figures, order and positions, produce diversity and change that we see in the world. "The soul consists of fine, smooth, round atoms, like those of fire. These atoms are the most mobile, and by their motion, which permeates the whole body, the phenomena of life are produced." (Zeller.) The question is : Whence comes movement ? The Atomists reply that movement, in the shape of alternate attraction and repulsion, is in the very constitution of the atoms themselves. And this movement expands, producing a wider movement throughout the common mass. But why do the atoms move at all ? What is the ultimate ground of their motion ? The Atomists are compelled to bring in necessity or predestination here, as opposed to reason and explain creation and dissolution by means of it. Ancient Atomism stops here.

Materialism progresses further by the discoveries of modern science. The difficulty that presents itself in Atomism is how two such absolutely dissimilar things as the atoms and their motion are yoked together. The Deists introduce God who, like a *deus ex machina* brings the atoms into existence and sets them in motion with uniform laws. But God, a super-sensuous Being, has no place in Materialism, since observation and experiment, the organon of science, fail to grasp Him. The Scientists, Faraday, Kelvin* and

*Lord Kelvin, though his 'Vortex Theory' helps to explain the purely materialistic cosmogony, believed, however, that "it was not in dead matter that they (Scientists) lived and moved and had their being, but in the creative and directive power which science compelled them to accept as an article of faith. They would not escape from that when they studied the Physics and Dynamics of living and dead matter all around.....Science was not antagonistic to religion but a help for religion." (From the London Times.) He said at another place that "overpoweringly strong proofs of intelligent design lie around us...showing us through nature the influence of a free will and teaching us that all living things depend on one everlasting Creator and Ruler."—Ed. P. B.

others solve the difficulty by resolving matter into motion. The atoms, they say, are centres of force, whirlpools of energy or magazines of power in moving equilibrium.

A new era opens for Materialism with the mechanical theory of evolution that raises it to its climax. Has the world come to be what it is all at once, or is it the result of a gradual process of evolution? Natural evidences, such as the structure of the earth and the remains of extinct species of plants and animals, prove that it is the product of an evolutionary process. But this evolution, according to the Materialists, is mechanical; there is no guiding intelligence or controlling power behind it. We may distinguish two stages in the evolution of the world as it now is, viz. cosmological and biological. At first evolves the cosmos, and then life and consciousness. At the dawn of creation the atoms, now constituting the sun, planets and satellites, are in a diffused gaseous form, extremely restless, producing heat and light by mutual impact and friction. In course of time with the dissipation of the energy of movement the atoms begin to condense by gravitation towards their centre of greatest density, and the whole mass becomes divided into several parts. In this way after millions of years evolve the cosmos and the habitable earth with air, soil, clouds, seas and rocks. This cosmological evolution has for its basis the Nebular Hypothesis of Laplace. Next comes the great question of Biology: what is life and how does life originate on earth? The celebrated Biologists, Darwin, †

† The great French Astronomer Laplace, asked by Napoleon, I. about the place of God in his system, honestly replied, "Sire, I have managed without that hypothesis." But Darwin in his epoch-making book on "The Origin of Species" most clearly maintains: "I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed by the Creator" and he again speaks of

Lamarck and Spencer gave a great impetus to the biological science by their original research and discoveries. They explain the origin of life by the doctrine of *abiogenesis* or spontaneous generation—that living creatures come into being from what is lifeless—by the working of the forces inherent in the atoms. Thus life is nothing but the self-sustaining, moving equilibrium of atoms, arranged by fortuitous variation into the nucleated protoplasmic cell. And as the cell multiplies, by action and reaction upon one another as well as by the force of environment, the different organs of the organism are evolved. Life, while maintaining itself in an individual, continues also in the generations of individuals by reproduction. But nature, in her economy, selects only the fittest of the individual organisms, while the majority perish in the hard struggle for existence. These select ones group into different classes according to their respective natural affinity and form the countless species of plants and animals that now inhabit the elements of earth, water and air. What is then the wonderful phenomenon of consciousness? It is simply an epiphenomenon, a by-product. As the liver secretes bile, similarly the complex workings of the brain-cells generate consciousness. It is the physical brain that thinks, feels and wills. All causation is material—a transference of motions from atoms to atoms. The shadow follows the moving figure, but has no effect upon its movements; in the same way consciousness accompanies certain kinds of brain-work without any influence

"the *latus impressum* on matter by Creator." But most of the Darwinians look upon this admission of Darwin's as a mere weakness of the moment. And the majority of the famous Scientists, especially the Biologists believe in '*abiogenesis*' and deny the existence of 'a vital principle,' although some of the most eminent of the scientific men believe in a great eternal principle that underlies the world and directs and controls its evolution.

upon that work. Thus the civilised man of to-day is reduced to an automaton, a handi-work of blind nature, although he has become what he now is by passing through the various evolutionary stages of lifeless, unconscious matter, primordial gerin-cell, animal life with instinct and human organism with higher reason. In his 'Descent of Man' Darwin ingeniously demonstrates this with ample, interesting illustrations from nature.

Materialism, as a theory of the world, prepares the way for Hedonism and Utilitarianism in the field of Ethics. Hedonism counts among its adherents the ancient schools of the Charvakas in India and the Cyrenaics and the Epicureans in Europe. Pleasure, say the Hedonists, is the *summum bonum* of life—the ultimate standard by which conduct should be regulated. Pleasure helps the onward current of life, pain thwarts it. We naturally seek what is agreeable and avoid what is disagreeable. Besides, the naturalistic conclusion that dust we are and to dust we shall return at the disintegration of the body, urges us to make the most of things within the brief span allotted to us. Let us, therefore, eat, drink and be merry and try to have the maximum of pleasure within the minimum of time. But Hedonism, though subsequently modified with the introduction of judicious calculation in enjoyment, centres its interest round the individual; it is egoistic. Man is, by nature, a social being; he is born for a life in common. Society is an organic whole, consisting of individuals; the life, growth and well-being of both are closely knit together. Individual happiness is therefore impossible, if it be in conflict with general welfare. The high priests of modern Utilitarianism, Bentham, Mill and the like, bring in an altruistic element into Hedonism by taking into account 'the greatest good of the greatest number.' A man to be happy himself must make others also happy. Hence society has entered, of course from prudential considerations, into a formal contract of

rights and duties which furnishes us the Moral Code and Jurisprudence. Atheism and Agnosticism are the necessary corollaries of Hedonism and Utilitarianism as also of all naturalistic theories. God, say all Materialists, is a useless hypothesis, having nothing to do with the practical concerns of our life;

Let us now consider how far Materialism is tenable in theory and practice. Matter as conceived by the Materialists is nothing; but a construction of their mind and not matter as it really is. Thus Materialism is involved in an inextricable puzzle—a seesaw, viz., that matter produces mind and mind produces matter. Besides, the starry heavens above and the earth below with the inexhaustible wealth of organic and inorganic worlds cannot be the work of blind, reckless nature. Fortuitous variation, natural selection and inheritance of acquired modifications, upon which Materialism rests, are broken seeds to lean upon. The different letters of the alphabet by chance juxtaposition would rather make Kalidasa's masterpiece, the *Avijnana-Shakuntalam*, but unconscious nature would never produce the cosmos. It is an undeniable fact that there are evidences of design throughout the universe and the natural conclusion is that a supremely intelligent principle with unlimited powers is behind it. Further, by the principle of *ex nihilo nihil fit*, something cannot come out of nothing. We can conceive the transformation of matter into energy—molar, molecular, thermal and chemical; but even by the utmost stretch of imagination we cannot conceive the transformation of the brain-cells into consciousness. The analogies drawn by the Materialists to explain the genesis of consciousness are not at all satisfactory. The liver and its product, the bile, are of the same nature, in so far as they are both extended; but the physical brain is quite unlike its alleged product—consciousness. Moreover, against the naturalistic hypothesis that all causation is physical, we find mind as an

active cause, producing change in the organism and in nature. It is a fact which none can question that the presence of consciousness means much to the body. In many cases we note that the body and nature obey like bond-slaves the dictates of the mind that rules over them. The other day we read in a newspaper the story of a wonderful *yogi*. Though physically not strong enough to cope with an ordinary athlete, he stopped, by a mere look, a train from moving an inch. Faith-cure and the *yogic* powers of clairvoyance, telepathy, hypnotism and the like prove, beyond doubt, the wonderful capacities of the spirit and its influence over nature. Materialistic Ethics stands on grounds all the more slippery and dangerous. Hedonism is the moral code of the brute in man, for it gives license to the gratifications of the senses. Better a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. Man is man because of his higher consciousness that keeps under restraint his lower appetites. Though attractive at the beginning, sense-pleasures are momentary in their nature and bitter in the end. The story is told of king Yayati who, cut off from the full enjoyment of youth found himself quite unsatisfied. Desirous of enjoying more he exchanged his age and infirmity for the youth and sensibility of his son and let loose the reins of his passions. But alas! he too declared at last in disgust :

न जातु कामः कामानाशुपभोगेन शास्त्रति ।

हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मे भूय द्वाभिर्धर्थते ॥

—“Desires are never satisfied by the enjoyment of sense-objects, but wax all the more even as the flame increases by the pouring of ghee.” Thus Hedonism that evaluates life-values by pleasure cannot be the goal and standard of life. Utilitarianism is also a failure, for it is nothing but another name for prudentialism, based on the commercial principle of mutual ‘give and take.’ Why should men sacrifice their individual happiness for the general well-being, if they can

help doing otherwise? It is not utility that actuates the patriot who stakes his life and all that he has to safeguard the interests of his country and the martyr who courts all sorts of persecution for the defence of his faith. The keynote of the ethical standard must therefore be something higher than mere pragmatic considerations of utility. The two essential conditions of morality are the immortality of the soul and the existence of God, but for which there would be chaos in the moral government of the world. The society and the state, with their limited jurisdiction, can detect only a few of the vices and crimes; many a scoundrel, the vilest of sinners, escape unscathed at their physical death. But justice and equity demand that all men must survive after death and reap the fruits of their actions, good or bad and be happy or miserable accordingly. Above all, to make morality possible, God, the Universal Reason, in Whom we live, move and have our being must be posited as existing, for He alone can be the goal of life, the eternal sanction of morality and the कर्मफलदाता—‘giver of the fruits of actions’ to all. But the Materialists reject both these vital conditions and are entangled in fallacies after fallacies,

Metaphysically and ethically baseless, Materialism, in its vain struggle for the maximum of lust, gold and power, has also brought to the world a host of evils—strife, competition, bloodshed, immorality and irreligion. Real peace and contentment have been banished from the face of the earth. May better sense awaken man and liberate him from the vain and painful illusion of Materialism!

BRAHMACHARI BHAVACHAITANYA.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CLXXXIII.

U. S. A.
1890.

Dear A—

Last week I wrote you about the Brahmanavdin. I forgot to write about the Bhakti lectures. They ought to be published in a book all together. A few hundreds may be sent to America to G—— in New York. Within twenty days I sail for England. I have other big books on Karma, Jnana, and Raja Yogas—the Karma is out already, the Raja will be a very big book and is already in the Press. The Jnana will have to be published, I think, in England.

A letter you published from K. in the Brahmanavdin was rather unfortunate. K. is smarting under the blows the —'s have given him and that sort of letter is vulgar, pitching into everybody. It is not in accord with the tone of the Brahmanavdin.* So in future when K. writes, tone down everything that is an attack upon any sect, however cranky or crude. Nothing which is against any sect, good or bad, should get into the Brahmanavdin. Of course, we must not show active sympathy with frauds. Again let me remind you that the paper is too technical to find any subscriber here. The average Western neither knows nor cares to know all about jaw-breaking Sanskrit terms and technicalities. The paper is well fitted for India—that is all that I see. Every word of special pleading should be eliminated from the Editorials and you must always remember that you are addressing the whole world, not India alone, and that the same world is entirely ignorant of what you have got to tell them. Use the translation of every Sanskrit term carefully and make things as easy as possible.'

Before this reaches you I will be in England. So address me c/o E. T. Sturdy Esq., High View, Caversham, Eng.

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

CLXXXIV.

Alambazar Math, Calcutta.
May 5th, 1897.

Dear —

I have been to Darjeeling for a month to recuperate my shattered health. I am very much better now. The disease disappeared altogether in Darjeeling. I am going tomorrow to Almora, another Hill Station, to perfect this improvement.

Things are looking not very hopeful here as I have already written you—though the whole nation has risen as one man to honour me and people went almost mad over me! The practical part cannot be bad in India. Again, the price of the land has gone up very much near Calcutta. My idea at present is to start three centres at three capitals. These would be my normal schools, from thence I want to invade India.

India is already Ramakrishna's whether I live a few years more or not.

I had a very kind letter from Prof. James in which he points out my remarks about degraded Buddhism. You also write that D—— is very wroth about it. Mr. D—— is a good man and I love him, but it would be entirely wrong for him to go into fits over things Indian.

I am perfectly convinced that what they call Modern Hinduism with all its ugliness is only stranded Buddhism. Let the Hindus understand this clearly and then it would be easier for them to reject it without murmur. As for the ancient form which the Buddha preached, I have the greatest respect for it, as well as for His person. And you will know that we Hindus worship Him as an Incarnation. Neither is the Buddhism of Ceylon any good.

My visit to Ceylon has entirely disillusioned me, and the only living people there are the Hindus. The Buddhists are all much Europeanised—even Mr. D—and his father had European names, which they have since changed. The only respect the Buddhists pay to their great tenet of non-killing is by opening "butcher-stalls" in every place! And the priests encourage this! The real Buddhism I once thought of, would yet do *much good*. But I have given up the idea entirely and I clearly see the reason why Buddhism was driven out of India and we will only be too glad if the Ceylonese carry off the remnant of this religion with its hideous idols and licentious rites.

About the —'s you must remember first that in India —'s and Buddhists are non-entities. They publish a few papers and make a lot of splash and try to catch Occidental ears * *

I was one man in America and another here. Here the whole nation is looking upon me as their authority—there I was a much reviled preacher. Here Princes draw my carriage, there I would not be admitted to a decent hotel. My utterances here, therefore, must be for the good of the race, my people—however unpleasant they might appear to a few. Acceptance, love, toleration for everything sincere and honest—but never for hypocrisy. The —'s tried to fawn and flatter me as I am the authority now in India and therefore it was necessary for me to stop my work giving away sanction to their humbugs, by a few bold, decisive words, and the thing is done. I am very glad. If my health had permitted, I would have cleared India by this time of these upstart humbugs, at least tried my best. * * * Let me tell you that India is already Ramakrishna's, and for a purified Hinduism I have organised my work here a bit.

Yours

Vivekananda.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND BOOK-LEARNING.

SUR so-called Pandits talk big. They tell you of Brahman, God, the Absolute, of Jnana-Yoga, Philosophy, Ontology and what not. But there are very few who care to realise what they talk about. Many think that knowledge of God cannot be attained except through books. It is better to hear from the mouth of the preceptor than to read the Scriptures oneself, but realisation of the Truth is the best.—Sri Ramakrishna.

द्विर्यं वेदिनश्च हनि. परा च अपरा च, अय परा वा वेदां वेदामधिगम्यते “There are two sorts of Knowledge, the higher and the lower. Of these the highest is that by which the Imperishable Brahman is realised”—so says the Mundaka Upanishad. While the Vedas, Grammar, treatises on Rhetoric, Prosody, Astronomy and all other branches of learning form parts of the lower Knowledge, which is good only when it leads to the higher. The vast mass of the literature of the Hindus bear clear testimony to the fact that since the very hoary antiquity India has been the land of religion, which has stood the onslaughts of ages, which still maintains its pre-eminent position and exerts the greatest influence on the life and thought of the people. All the Scriptures hold the realisation of the Atman as the highest ideal of life, and the Upanishads declare in the most unequivocal terms that न वै वात्मा प्रवचनेन जन्मेता न मेष्टवा न बहुता भूतेन—“this Atman is not realised by learning, intelligence or knowledge of the Scriptures” but आत्मा वा च इष्टव्या अत्मतज्ज्ञानसिद्ध्यः—“the Atman is to be seen, heard, thought of and meditated upon,” and this has been the shastric means that lead to the attainment of the highest goal of human existence.

The late Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar, the pioneer Homeopath of Calcutta, once asked a friend, “Why, did Sri Ramakrishna learn from the

Scriptures? Is book-learning indispensable?" Hearing these words Sri Ramakrishna said, "Do you know how much I have heard?" The Doctor replied, "There would have been mistakes had you simply heard. It is realisation that has made you so learned." And it is a fact that ever since his childhood he had much fascination for the stories of the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and also great attraction for religious discourses and the country dramatic performances of Puranic episodes that were held in his village from time to time. Besides he found great pleasure in cultivating acquaintance with itinerant Sadhus who would come to the village; and pleased with his little acts of service they would tell him about their wonderful travels and also the ways of meditation and the higher life. But Sri Ramakrishna showed great dislike for the education that was imparted in schools—education that might bring only worldly position and power but could not add strength to the character, neither illumine the heart, nor help one to attain love and devotion to God.

Sri Ramakrishna all along was more or less in touch with the pilgrim Sadhus who used to resort to the retired garden of Dakshineswar. As he himself narrated, at times there would be a great rush of Sannyasins, when Paramahansas, highly advanced and well-versed in the lore of Vedanta, would come to the garden and spend days and nights in his room, discussing about the nature of Brahman and Maya, about Asti (Existence), Bhāti (Intelligence) and Priya (Bliss) and other abstruse topics of Vedanta; and sometimes he had to settle their points of dispute in his characteristic simple words. Again there used to come Sadhus of other sects—the Ramaites, Vairagis and Babajis—who would devote their time to the worship of God, sing the glory of the Lord and read works on devotion that spoke of the saving power of Bhakti. He told also about his Guru, the learned Brahmin lady, and how she helped him to practise the

various Sadhanas of Tantra and also as regards his other Guru, Tota Puri, who initiated him into the Paramahansa Order, taught him the mysteries of the Advaita Vedanta, enabled him to attain the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the highest state of silent-consciousness, and stayed with him for eleven months out of love and attraction for the great disciple.

Sri Ramakrishna learnt mainly from the book of knowledge that is within and also from his Gurus, persons who lived the life of spirituality and practised what they professed. A keen observer of human nature that he was, he discovered even in his boyhood the futility of mere book-learning and this idea developed in his later life with the experiences of years. And if learning, though it has its uses and is in itself valuable enough, produces vanity and pride and stands as an obstacle to the spiritual life, it becomes a positive evil. Sri Ramakrishna had a cousin who was well-versed in the Scriptures. At times, being deeply impressed by Sri Ramakrishna's burning devotion and high spirituality he would exclaim, "Now I have rightly understood that the Divinity manifests itself in you." But again when after taking a pinch of snuff he would sit down to read the Srimad-Bhagavatam, the Gita or the Adhyatma Ramayana, the pedantry in him would assert itself and he would be an altogether changed man. Sri Ramakrishna understood Sanskrit, though he could not talk in the language. Approaching his cousin he would sometimes say, "I can understand all that you read in the Scriptures, I have realised them." Whereupon the cousin would scornfully retort, "You are a fool, how can you understand these?" This is the general attitude of the so-called Pandits towards even those who without caring much for book-knowledge draw their inspiration from the very source of knowledge that is within. And this cousin sometimes used to admonish Sri Ramakrishna for his not observing all the conventionalities of the society—"I shall see how your children

get married!" Such a remark was often too much for Sri Ramakrishna to bear and being much moved he would reply: "Do you not say that the Scriptures declare that this is all Maya and everything is to be looked upon as Brahman? Do you think that I would say that the world is false and beget children like you? Fie upon such a learning!"

Knowledge does not exist in books which by their suggestions only call forth that already present in man. All the great men of the world discovered it only in themselves by direct intuitional perceptions—such is the testimony of history. And the highest knowledge can only be attained by the proper control of the senses and desires as well as by earnest spiritual practice that purifies the mind and ultimately kills the ego, thus unfolding the Spirit in all its glory. But ज्ञानं तत्केषु मतिरापनश्च—"this knowledge cannot be gained by reasoning," neither by mere dry intellectual speculation nor by deceptive poetic vision.

Once Srijit Keshab Chandra Sen asked Sri Ramakrishna, "How is it, Sir, that the learned scholars remain so profoundly ignorant of true spirituality, although they read quite a library of religious books?" Sri Ramakrishna replied, "You see, the minds of the so-called learned scholars are attached to things of the world—to lust and gold, in spite of their erudition of the sacred lore, and hence they cannot attain true knowledge."

Ours is an age when materialism in its various forms is dominating the minds of men all the world over and has also spread its unwholesome influence in this holy land of the Rishis. So much dazzled have been the minds of men by the glamour of modern Western civilisation and so great is the scepticism about things super-sensuous, that there exists a general disbelief about the possibility of spiritual visions and higher intuitional perceptions, which are often branded as the productions of the pathological brain. Things have come to such a pass!

Sri Ramakrishna had to ply between the Scylla of pedantry and the Charybdis of scepticism. Without caring for book-learning, true to the ancient tradition of the Hindus, he learnt directly from his teachers, drank deep of the perennial fountain of knowledge that was within him and realised the highest spiritual truths by his sincere devotion and strenuous practice. He found out that it was not religion but its travesty that was responsible for the downfall of the country, that religion was realisation and spiritual visions came from a deeper level of the human nature and were more real than the so-called real world that was perceived by the senses. At the time when Swami Vivekananda, then Narendranath, was hankering for the realisation of the Truth and in vain searched for a teacher who had himself seen God and could bring light that would dispel the gloom of his heart, he at last by divine dispensation came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna. The first question that the Swami asked was, "Sir, have you seen God?" "Yes, my boy," was the reply, "I see Him just as I see you, only in a much intenser sense." The Swami was deeply impressed and practically from that day became his disciple. And it is well known how later on he himself verified in his own life the reality of the Truth that he learnt from his Master.

It is not uncommon that men of even very high intellectual attainments have not the capacity to rightly understand the true significance of the spiritual life. And there were many who though not always wrong in heart were mistaken in their judgment about Sri Ramakrishna's Samadhi and the high states of spiritual ecstasy, which, no wonder, were by many thought to be no better than hysterical or epileptic fits. Such a mistaken opinion once reached the Master's ears and he remarked, "Do you say that this is a disease and I really become unconscious? Can one become unconscious by constant meditation on the source of all consciousness, while you people

remain all right, as you say, setting your heart on matter?" And indeed without gaining access into the realm of true spirituality, without coming face to face with the Truth, it is not possible for a man really to appreciate the value of spiritual realisations and judge them aright.

SKI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 139.)

असासि हेतुरुदयस्थितिसैयमाना-
मव्यक्तजीवमहतामपि कालमाहुः ।
सोऽयं त्रिगोभिरखिलापचये प्रवृत्तः
कालो गभीररय उत्तमपूर्णस्त्वम् ॥१५॥

15. Thou art the cause of the origin, continuity and dissolution of this universe, (the Vedas) call Thee the Ruler of the Undifferentiated,¹ the Jiva and the Mahat² also. Thou also art Time with its three naves,³ which we know to be of immense power,—which destroys everything. Ah, Thou art the Supreme Being.

[¹ *Undifferentiated*—same as Maya.

² *Mahat*—the first modification of Prakriti. This is designated as Brahman in the Puranas.

³ *Three naves*: The year is divided into three groups of four months each.

For the ideas of these two Slokas compare Katha Upa. II. 11, and Gita XV. 16-18.]

त्वतः पुमान्समधिगम्य ययात्य वीर्यं
धत्ते महान्तमिव गर्भममोघवीर्यः ।
सोऽयं तयानुगत आत्मन आण्डकोपं
हैमं सप्तर्ज बहिरावरणौरुपेतम् ॥१६॥

16. Receiving energy from Thee, the Purusha,¹ of infallible power, along with Maya holds within Himself the Mahat, like the embryonic state of this universe. This Mahat, backed by the same Maya, projected from within itself the golden

sphere² of the universe, provided with outer coverings.³

[¹ *The Pitrusha etc.*—In this Sloka Sri Krishna is addressed as Brahman, next to which comes the Isvara aspect, then Maya, then Mahat or Cosmic Intelligence; and lastly, the manifested universe—this seems to be the order.

² *Sphere*—lit. egg.

³ *Outer coverings*—layers of varying density.]

तत्सथुष्वर्ष जगत्श्वर्ष भवानंधीरो
यन्मायंयोत्थेगुणविकिंयथोपनीतान् ।

ब्रह्मज्ञुषभिपि द्विकपते न लिप्तो
येऽन्ये स्वतः परिहृतादपि विभृति स्म ॥१७॥

17. Therefore art Thou the Lord of the movable and immovable, for Thou, O Ruler of the organs, art untouched by the sense-objects—even though enjoying them—which are presented by the activity of the organs created by Maya, and of which others¹ are afraid, even when² these are themselves absent.

[¹ *Others*—including even saints.

² *Even when etc.*—because nobody is too sure that he has no attachment at heart for them.]

सायावलोकलवदर्शितभीवहारि-
भ्रूमण्डलप्रहितसौरतमन्त्रयैरण्डैः ।

पन्यस्तु षोडशहस्रमनङ्गवाणौ-
यस्येन्द्रियं विमथितुं करणौ न विभृत्यः॥१८॥

18. Thou whose mind sixteen thousand wives failed to unbalance with their love-shafts and allurements: their smiling glances expressing their ardour which rendered beautiful their eye-brows from which love-messages were sent forth to strengthen those love-shafts.

विभृयस्तथामृतकथोदवहास्त्रिलोक्या:
पादावनेजसरित शमलानि हन्तुम ।

आनुभवं श्रुतिभिरङ्गिजमङ्गसङ्गै-
स्तीर्थद्वयं शुचिषदस उपस्पृणन्ति ॥१९॥

19. The streams carrying the waters of

Thy glory¹ that confer immortality, as well as those² which have sprung from the washing of Thy feet, are potent enough to destroy the sins of the three worlds. Those who abide³ by their (respective) duties touch both these streams, the former—set forth in the Vedas⁴—through their ears, and the latter—issuing from Thy feet—by physical contact.

[¹ Streams.....glory—i. e. the rivers of Thy glory sung in the sacred books.

² Those etc.—as, for instance, the Ganges which is believed to have thus sprung.

³ Who abide etc.—i. e. virtuous people.

⁴ The Vedas—are called *amusrava* because they are heard from the lips of the Guru.]

वादरायणिरुचाच ॥
त्यभिषूय विवृद्धैः सेशः शतभृतिरहिम् ।
मध्यभाषत गोविन्दं प्रणम्याम्बरमाश्रितः २०॥

Suka Said :

20. Thus praising the Lord, Brahmā with the gods and Shiva saluted Him and ascending the sky said:

ग्रहोचाच ॥
भूमेर्भावनाराय पुरा विज्ञापितः प्रभो ।
त्वमस्माभिरयेषात्मस्तत्त्वैष्योपपादितम् ॥२१॥

Brahmā said:

21. O Lord, we formerly besought Thee to reduce the burden of the earth. O Thou Self of all, Thou hast done it exactly as we wished.

धर्मश्च खापितः सत्सु सत्यसन्धेषु वै त्वया ।
कीर्तिश्च दिक्षु विद्विषा सर्वलोकमलापदा ॥२२॥

22. Thou hast placed religion in the hands of the virtuous who are devoted to Truth, and hast spread in all directions Thy fame that takes away the impurities of all.

अवतीर्थं यदोर्वर्ये विभ्रूपमनुत्तमम् ।
कर्माण्युद्धामवृत्तानि हिताय जगतोऽकृथाः ॥२३॥

23. Having incarnated in Yadu's line and assuming a matchless form Thou hast done deeds of surpassing valour for the good of the world;

यानि ते चरितानीरा मनुज्याः साधवः कलौ ।

शृणुवन्तः कीर्तयन्तश्च तरिष्यन्त्यज्ञसा तमः ॥२४॥

24. Hearing and reciting which deeds of Thine, O Lord, good people will easily get beyond ignorance in this iron age.

यदुवंशेऽवतीर्थस्य भवतः पुरुषोन्नम ।

शरक्षनं व्यतीयाय पञ्चविंशिकं प्रभो ॥२५॥

25. O Lord, O Thou Supreme Being, a hundred and twenty-five years have passed since Thou didst incarnate in Yadu's line.

नाधुना तेऽखिलाधार देवकार्यावरेषितम् ।

कुलं च विप्राणेन न एषायमभूदितम् ॥२६॥

26. O Thou Support of the universe, Thou hast now no more work to do for the gods, and this line¹ also is almost at the point of destruction owing to the Brahmanas' curse.²

[¹ This line—i. e. the Vádevaline.

² Curse—This alludes to the curse which some Rishis coming to Dwaraka gave the Vádhav boys who played a trick with them.]

ततः स्वधाम परमं विशस्त यदिः मन्यसे ।

सलोकांह्योकपालाशः पाहि वैकुण्ठकिळरान् ॥२७॥

27. Therefore, if Thou thinkest fit, deign to go back to Thy own supreme abode,¹ and protect us, the lords of beings, together with our people,—for we are but servants of Vaikuntha.

[¹ Own abode—i. e. Vaikuntha mentioned in the last line.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ॥

अवधारितमेतन्मे यदात्म विवृद्धेश्वर ।

कृतं वः कार्यमस्ति भूमेर्भाराऽवतारितः ॥२८॥

The Lord said:

28. I have already decided what thou

art saying, O Lord of the gods; I have finished your entire work and taken off the burden of the earth.

तदिदं बाहवकुलं वीर्योर्यन्त्रियोऽद्यतम् ।
ओकं जिघृद्वद्रुदं मे वेलयेव महार्णवः ॥२५॥

29. This famous line of Yadu, haughty with the splendour brought on by strength and prowess, is bidding fair to overrun the world, and is only stopped from doing so, by me, like the ocean by its coast.

यदसंहृत्य हस्तानं यशूनां विषुकं कुलम् ।
गन्तास्त्वयेन लोकेऽयमुद्गेलेन विन्दूच्छिति ॥३०॥

30. If I leave without destroying this extensive line of the proud Yadus, they will overstep all bounds, and put an end to this world.

इदानीं नाय आरम्भः कुलस्य द्विजणापतः ।
बास्यामि भवनं ब्रह्मणेतदन्ते तवानवः ॥३१॥

31. O Brahman, now has the destruction of this line set in, consequent on the Brahmanas' curse, and I shall visit thy abode, O pure one, at the end of this.

[³ Visit etc.—on His way to Vaikuntha.]

श्रीषुक उच्चाच् ॥

इत्युक्ते लोकनाथेन स्ययंभूः प्रणिपत्य तम् ।
सह देवगणैर्देवः स्वधाम समपद्यत ॥३२॥

Suka said :

32. Being thus accosted by the Lord of the universe, Lord Brahma saluted Him and went back to his abode, along with the gods.

अथ तस्यां महोत्पातान्द्रारथ्यां समुत्तितात् ।
विलोक्य भगवानाह यदुवृद्धान्समागतात् ॥३३॥

33. Then beholding dire calamities overtaking the city of Dwaraka, the Lord addressed the assembled elders of the Yadus:

श्रीभगवानुचाच् ॥

एते वै सुमहोत्पाता व्युत्पिष्टन्तीह सर्वतः ।
शोपभ्य नः कुलस्यासीद्वायाणेभ्यो दुरत्ययः ॥३४॥

The Lord said:

34. See how the direst calamities are visiting this city everywhere, and there has been an irremediable curse upon our line from the Brahmanas.

न वस्तव्यमिहास्माभिजिज्ञाविषुभिरायेकाः ।
अभासं सुमहत्पुरां यास्यामोऽद्यैव मा चिरम् ॥३५॥

35. O revered ones, we must not dwell here (any more) if we wish to live. We shall repair to the exceedingly holy Prabhâsa, even to-day; there should be no delay.

यत्र स्त्रात्वा दक्षसादृग्दीतो यस्मणोऽुराश्च ।
विशुकः किलिव्रशात्सद्यो भेजे भूयः कलादयम् ॥३६॥

36. Bathing in which place Chandra (the moon), who was afflicted with consumption by Daksha's curse, was instantaneously cured of his evil and again had his digits restored.

[⁴ Curse—According to Hindu mythology Chandra married twenty-seven daughters of the Prajapati Daksha (27 constellations). Daksha cursed his son-in-law for his undue partiality for his favourite wife, Rohini, to the exclusion of some of his other wives.]

क्यं च तस्मिन्नाप्लुत्य तर्पयित्वा पितृन्सुरान् ।

भोजयित्वैशिजो विप्राज्ञानागुणाचताळधमा ॥३७॥

तेषु दानानि पात्रेषु अद्ययोपत्वा महान्ति है ।

इजिनानि तरिष्यामो दानैर्नीभरिवार्णवम् ॥३८॥

37-38. We, too, bathing there, offering libations of water to the manes and gods, feeding gifted Brahmanas with excellent food, and respectfully offering⁴ gifts to these worthies, shall by means of these gifts get over our sins, like crossing the sea by means of boats.

[⁴ Offering—The word in the text literally means 'sowing.' As seeds sown on good soil yield abundant crops, so gifts made to proper persons bear rich fruit in future life.]

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

Manusamhita (Sanskrit)—with a commentary by the late Pandit Kashi Chandra Vidyaratna, containing an introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarakabhusan. Published by Sri Heramba Nath Bhattacharya, 43 B Lakshmi Dutta Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 784 + vi. Price Rs. 6-8.

The orthodox Hindu Society is still guided to a great extent as regards the Samskaras, including both the prenatal and post-mortem rites and ceremonies, the duties of life, succession and partition of inheritance etc., by the injunctions of the Smritis, though unfortunately the local and popular customs have sometimes a greater hold on the people than what is really beneficial. With the change of times and circumstances fresh social laws and customs are brought into existence to suit the time-spirit and the new needs of the society. At the present time, when the Hindu society is passing through a period of transition that has greatly affected time-honoured traditions and customs, it is a desideratum to make an intelligent and reverential study of our own laws as embodied in the Smritis, which though containing things that are now looked on as objectionable and useless, will no doubt help us greatly to bring about the social reconstruction that would be in keeping with the spirit and principles of the ancient Hindus.

Besides the *Manusamhita*, there are the *Mitakshara*, *Raghunandana's Smriti* etc. that are followed in different parts of India. But even then the Codes of Manu hold the pre-eminent place. We, therefore, welcome this posthumous edition of the *Manusamhita* containing the commentary *Chira Prabha* from the pen of the erudité scholar, the late Pandit Kashi Chandra Vidyaratna. Having gone through portions of the commentary we are struck by the originality, lucidity of expression and elegant style which the author has exhibited in his learned exposition of the Smriti-texts. Though there are extant several commentaries of the *Manusamhita* by eminent scholars, as Medhatithi, Rama-chandra, Kullukabhatta and others, we are sanguine that this new edition will be much appreciated by the Pandits of the country as it throws new light on some of the disputable points of the Smriti.

The text and the commentary are printed in Devanagari characters. The book will be all the more valued by the educated in Bengal for the translation of the texts in Bengali. The printing and paper are excellent. The book is without any contents and index. We would like

to suggest to the publishers of Sanskrit works that they should make it a point to add both of these to increase the value and usefulness of the books. The price of the book is not too high considering the increased cost of paper and printing. But we would have preferred a cheaper edition that could be brought within the easy reach of the general readers in our poverty-stricken country.

The following publications by the enterprising firm of Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras, have been lying for some time past on our table for review:

Swaraj in One Year.—By Mahatma Gandhi. Pp. 94. Price 8 as. It comprises some of the notable speeches of Mahatma Gandhi on the one burning topic of the day. It also contains a few articles culled from the "Young India." The book clearly explains what the author means by Swaraj for India, and also his idea as to how to obtain it and at what sacrifice.

Freedom's Battle.—By the same author. Pp. 342 + xxiv. Price Rs. 2-8.

The book covers a larger ground and deals with 'the Khilafat,' 'the Punjab Wrongs,' 'Hindu-Moslem Unity,' 'Treatment of the Depressed Classes,' 'Treatment of Indians Abroad' etc. It also contains a long introduction by Mr. C. Rajagopalachar. The articles are mainly collected from Mahatmaji's writings in the 'Young India' and his speeches delivered at various places of India on the momentous questions of the day.

However greatly one may differ from the author as regards purely political matters, one cannot but be full of admiration for his very laudable attempts to elevate the masses, specially the depressed classes, and to solve the great problems of food and cloth which confront them. Next to the question of food comes that of education which has been all along so utterly neglected. Democratic government would be a mockery unless the people are able to think for themselves and work out their own problems. And to accomplish this the value of education can never be overestimated.

At the Point of the Spindle.—By Srimati Sarala Devi Chaudhurani. Pp. 16. Price 4 as.

This brochure is an admirable presentation of the necessity for re-introducing the spinning wheel in the Indian homes. The dictum that the nation lives in the cottage cannot exhaust its force by reiteration. And it is the destruction of the Indian cottage-industry that has nearly brought about the present economic depression. The cost of food has become more or less certain in India and to-day the country is face to face with that of

cloth also. But in India a time there was when the hand that spun not only supplied the nation with food, cloth and comfort but exported a great deal of home-spun merchandise to foreign countries. The authoress remarks, "This manufacturing power of India lay not principally in her looms but primarily in her spinning wheels," and concludes, "The battery of the spinning wheel alone can bring about a bloodless moral revolution."

How India can be free.—By Mr. C. F. Andrews.
/ Pp. 15. Price 4 as.

Endowed as he is with a heart overflowing with love and sympathy, Mr. Andrews, a true follower of Christ, has been a tried friend of the poor and suffering Indian labourers at home and abroad and is one of those few Englishmen who have dedicated themselves to India's cause. Mr. Andrews describes vividly how he came nearer to Indians so that he could see things from the true Indian standpoint. He advocates what those who are working for India's uplift and have the country's real good at heart should always remember—the great and sublime teachings of Gautama Buddha—

"Overcome anger by kindness,
Overcome untruth by truth,
Overcome hatred by love."

REPORTS AND APPEALS

Sri Ramakrishna Mission and the Chandpur Coolie Relief Work.—The public have already been informed that the R. K. Mission deputed workers to relieve the distressed coolies at Chandpur. We publish below extracts from the report of the work as submitted by Swami Bhumananda after closing the Mission relief work there:—

The coolies left the Assam Tea gardens to save themselves from starvation and arrived by detachments at Chandpur where they were ill treated and roughly handled by the Gurkhas. But pleased with the services of their countrymen they have now returned in joy to their native places in two batches by steamers via Goalundo and from there by railway to Asansol. A few patients with their relations numbering about 40 only have been left behind.... The Congress leaders took charge of the medical relief of the Coolies from the Government doctor on the 28th May last and arranged as far as possible to look to the needs of the patient through Captain Bannerjee and other doctors.... At a critical moment the R. K. Mission workers arrived at

Chandpur and the local leaders welcomed them, for they as well as the general public of Chandpur remembered the well-organised and methodical way in which the R. K. Mission had conducted the famine relief work there in the year 1916. But still many had a misapprehension as to how the R. K. Mission which stood for Seva (humanitarian service) would work in co-operation with the Congress leaders whose aim was politics. The Mission workers however visited the coolie camps, heard from the local leaders all that was important to know about the situation of the relief work, and also met the Sub-divisional officer and the Divisional Commissioner. The Mission workers then made a proposal to the leaders that a committee be formed with two members of the Congress party, one of the Marwari Samity, Captain Bannerjee and one of the R. K. Mission to take charge of the relief work and that those who would work under the direction of this committee should not divide their energies between Seva and political propaganda work.... At first the proposal was not accepted. But as the local leaders were familiar with the efficiency of the relief work of the R. K. Mission they insisted the Mission workers to undertake the relief of the coolies. The Mission workers then told the leaders that if complete control of the management of this relief work were granted to them and if the Congress Committee would contribute Rs. 1000 in advance unconditionally in the hands of the Mission for this work and agree as well to pay as much money as would be necessary for the same, the Mission would undertake the charge of the work. The Congress Committee at last agreed to their proposal and also contributed to the Mission Rs. 1000. Thus the Mission receiving full control of the work from 29th May, gladly made for one week all arrangements in every department of the Seva work, except the medical. In addition to Rs. 1000 from the Congress Committee the Mission received Rs. 1100 from the Marwari Samity by several instalments. The Mission also spent Rs. 1000 from its own funds..... The Mission has given Chura and jaggery to the coolies before sending them to the steamers on their way home and has also paid Rs. 692-4 to 312 coolie families at the rate of Re. 1 per adult and 8 as. per child below 12 years of age, though some were given more as special cases..... However by the grace of the Lord the work has come to a close. The workers of the Mission now offer their heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Congress Committee, to the leaders of the Marwari Samity, to the local and mafassil gentlemen who have helped the work with their generous contributions and to all those volunteers and other people who helped and co-operated with them in this work.

*Sri Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary,
Bhubaneswar, Orissa.*

From a perusal of the report of the Rāmākrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary at Bhubaneswar from June 1919 to January 1921, we are glad to note that the Institution has become really a boon to the general public of the locality and to the poor pilgrims who come there in numbers from all parts of India, Bhubaneswar being an important sacred place of the Hindus. Besides these, villagers even from 15 or 16 miles off seek its aid which unmistakably proves its great usefulness. It was started only a year and a half ago and during the short period under review it has served 19,191 patients of whom 13,251 are new and 5,940 repeated cases. Daily average attendance in the year 1920 is 4113. We are also glad to note that it has now got a separate habitation of its own which is nearing completion, mainly through the generous contribution of Rs. 1,500 by the wife of Babu Manmatha Nath Mitra in memory of her late father.

The thanks of the Mission authorities are also due to Messrs. K. B. Sen & Co., Timber Merchants, Cuttack, who supplied most of the wooden materials necessary for the building at a nominal price of Rs. 40 only. The gratuitous supply of medicines from Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co., Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, Messrs. M. Bhattacharjee & Co., Messrs. Iswar Cundoo & Co. and others is the mainstay of the Institution. But unless help comes from the generous people of our country, it is too much to expect of some specified individuals to meet continuously all the demands of such a growing institution. For want of funds the institution is failing to furnish one of the rooms with operation equipment and has often to refuse most unwillingly simple surgical cases, to the discomfort of the poor sufferers. The authorities appeal to our generous countrymen to remove these crying needs of the Institution.

The following contributions were received for the building fund and maintenance of the Institution. The President of the Ramakrishna Mission kindly granted Rs. 250 from the Provident Fund; S. Amritananda, Rs. 2-0-9; Mr. Satyacharan Guha, Rs. 5; S. Turiyananda (in memory of S. Adbhutananda), Rs. 5; Mr. M. P. M. Pillai, Kyaiklas, Rs. 10; Rai Sakhi Chand Bahadur, Puri, Rs. 25; Mr. B. B. Bose, as. 12; Sj. Kuladananda Brahmachari, Rs. 100; Mr. S. C. Dutta, Calcutta, Rs. 25; Mr. N. Sitkar, Rangoon, Rs. 10; Mr. J. N. Bose, Calcutta, Rs. 2; Mr. K. C. Roy, Rs. 10; Through Sj. R. K. Majumdar, Rs. 41; Assistant Station Master, Bhubaneswar, Re. 1; Mr. S. C. Banerjee Rs. 100.

The total expenditure towards building con-

struction was Rs. 1865 and for the maintenance of the Institution Rs. 1341-6-0.

All contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the (1) Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Bhubaneswar P. O. (Orissa), (2) The President, Ramakrishna Math, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah (Bengal).

NEWS AND NOTES.

His Holiness Sri Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, arrived at Bangalore from Madras on the 14th June and was received at the station by his numerous followers and admirers. He is putting up at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore City, and intends to stay there for some time.

We regret to have to announce the death of Sadhu Bhupatinath, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, which sad event took place on Sunday, the 5th June. Nobody could make any idea that his end was hastily approaching. He was in deep meditation till the last breath and his hands were united just as in the position of 'Japa' until he was put on the funeral pyre. He was born in 1267 B. S. May his soul rest in peace!

The success of the Christian Missionary Organisations amongst the educated and high class Hindus is negligible. But the result which their work achieves among the outcaste communities, especially in South India, should make the Hindus ashamed of their apathy and utter neglect of duty towards the depressed classes. The latest returns show that as a result of the C. M. S. Telugu Mission's attempts at evangelisation over 6000 souls are estimated to have embraced Christianity during 1920. And a Christian paper piously believes, "If the money for the new teachers asked for.....can be found, the ingathering of the whole of the outcaste community in the Telugu Country within the next twenty years, under God's blessing, seems assured."

It is generally the prospect of social betterment and worldly advantage that induces our poor and illiterate brethren to abandon their own religion and culture. We would be the last persons to object to a man's accepting Christianity or any other religion, in case it is really essential for his social progress and he sincerely believes in it,

But for a man to give up the advantages of his national culture and civilisation for unspiritual considerations is positively injurious. Besides the question of denationalisation, it is also a fact that the Christian converts do not generally compare favourably in respect of morality and many social virtues with those of his own people who are still within the pale of Hinduism; neither do they always imbibe the virtues of the newly adopted foreign religion and civilisation. When will the educated Hindus divert their energy to better channels of activity and begin to work for the elevation of the masses in right earnest?

A public ceremony was performed to-day at Jhalrapatan by which an English lady, Miss V. C. Morrell, was admitted into the wider circle of liberal Hinduism. The novel and unique aspect of the ceremony was that it was performed by orthodox Pandits of great renown, backed by the local Hindu leaders and Hindu public, without any exception, who gave a hearty welcome to Miss Morrell under her new name, Vrinda Devi.

The function was conceived and executed under the special patronage of His Highness the Maharaja Rana of Jhalawar, who has from some time given his earnest attention to the task of simplifying the complex miscellany of the Indo-Aryan religion, passing under the misnomer, Hinduism. He sought to arrive at the common basis,...which not only covers the wide range of diversities of narrower circles but satisfies the religious hankерings of acute thinkers of any nation or any country.

The solution as presented by His Highness to the whole world and as applied to the above ceremony is outlined below:—

(1) Faith in Brahma. (2) Contemplation on Brahma in His dual aspect to attain to the great Unity through the gradual processes prescribed by the higher forms of Yoga. (3) Adoption of the Vedic Mantra (only Pranava or the whole of Gayatri) by which one prays only for the illumination of the intellect. (4) Out of regard for Hindu sentiments an undertaking not to eat beef.....

To be distinguished from the sectional liberal activities, such as those of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj, His Highness's wider circle has the characteristic feature of universal toleration and entails no hostile campaign or propaganda against the popular or common prejudices, which His Highness believes will be removed, reformed or restored to the higher spirit which underlay them originally, with the advancement of knowledge or education.—The Independent, June 19.

As regards conversion, the Sanatana Dharma should not only admit fresh adherents from other

faiths but also be ready to receive back the persons who were perverted from it, as also their descendants. The history of Hinduism gives unmistakable proofs of the conversion and assimilation of not only various aboriginal tribes but also of almost all those who invaded India and settled down in the land before the advent of the Muhammedans. Even in comparatively modern times Vaishnavism gathered under its banner converts from different castes and religions and this process is still going on in India and Ceylon to some extent.

The great vitality and the absorbent character of Hinduism tend to make one believe that at no very distant future it will be able to assimilate the Indian Christians without injuring in any way their essential faith in Christ, if they have it, accepting him as one of the Incarnations of God and giving Christianity a rational and liberal interpretation. And the work may be easily accomplished considering the important fact that there are doctrines in Hinduism which are very akin to the Christian form of faith and that there are Christians in Southern India, who in spite of influence to the contrary have not given up the stamp of the Hindu civilisation and still follow some of the rules of caste as well as many manners and customs of the Hindu society.

But that day would indeed be blessed when all religionists will come to realise a universal religion of which all the particular faiths are but different expressions suited to persons of diverse temperaments according to their inherent capacity and tendencies, when perfect religious freedom would be established and peace and harmony would reign on earth.

The presidential address of the Mysore Civic and Social Progress Association contains among others the following lines—" Illiterate depressed castes in several places have met and passed resolutions enjoining total abstinence from the accursed alcohol habit."

The work for the elevation of the suppressed classes has been till now conducted by Depressed Class Missions and similar private bodies. And it is a very wise step that the leaders of political thought have taken up the problem as an essential part of the national movement. The purification of the so-called untouchable societies by their giving up of the curse of drink and other unclean habits and customs, will remove the fear of pollution which the higher caste people entertain and this is sure to lead to better social treatment. And with the improvement of their economic condition also, the greatest impetus to their embracing Christianity will be removed.

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Katha Upan. I.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

Vol. XXVI]

AUGUST 1921

[No. 3c

BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM IN CEYLON.*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

UNDER the regime of Emperor Asoka his son Mahindo and his daughter Sanghamitta, who had taken the vow of Saunyasa, came to the island of Ceylon as religious missionaries. Reaching there they found the people had grown quite barbarous, and devoting their whole lives, they brought them back to civilisation as far as possible: they framed good moral laws for them and converted them to Buddhism. Soon the Ceylonese grew very staunch Buddhists, and built a great city in the centre of the island and called it Anuradhapuram. The sight of the remains of this city strikes one dumb even to-day—huge stupas, and dilapidated stone-buildings extending for miles and miles are standing to this day; and a great part of it is overgrown with

jungles which have not yet been cleared. Shaven-headed monks and nuns with the begging bowl in hand, clothed in yellow robe, spread all over Ceylon. At places colossal temples were reared containing huge figures of Buddha in meditation, of Buddha preaching the Law, and of Buddha in a reclining posture—entering into Nirvana. And the Ceylonese, out of mischief, painted on the walls of the temples, the supposed state of things in the Purgatory,—some are being thrashed by ghosts, some are being sawed, some burnt, some fried in hot oil and some being flayed—altogether a hideous spectacle! Who could know that in this religion which preached “non-injury as the highest virtue”—there would be room for such things! Such is the case in China too, so also in Japan. While preaching non killing so much in theory, they provide

* Written en route to the West to a brother-disciple.

for such an array of punishments as curdles up one's blood to see!

Once a thief broke into the house of a man of this non-killing type. The boys of the house caught hold of the thief and were giving him a sound beating. The master hearing a great row came out on the upper balcony and after making enquiries shouted out, "Cease from beating, my boys. Don't beat him. Non-injury is the highest virtue." The fraternity of junior non-killers stopped beating and asked the master what they were to do with the thief. The master ordered, "Put him in a bag, and throw him into water." The thief, much obliged at this humane dispensation, with folded hands said, "Oh! How great is the master's compassion!" Only I had heard that the Buddhists were very quiet people and equally tolerant of all religions. Buddhist preachers come to Calcutta and abuse us with choice epithets, although we offer them enough respect. Once I was preaching at Anuradhapuram among the Hindus—not the Buddhists—and that in an open maidan, not in anybody's property,—when a whole host of Buddhist monks and laymen, men and women, came out beating drums and cymbals and set up such an awful uproar! The lecture had to stop, of course, and there was the imminent risk of bloodshed. With great difficulty I had to persuade the Hindus that we at any rate might practise a bit of non-injury, if they did not. Then the matter ended peacefully.

* * *

The principal place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists is the Dalada Maligawa or Tooth-temple at Kandy, which contains a tooth of Lord Buddha. The Ceylonese say it was at first in the Jagannath Temple at Puri and after in my vicissi-

tides reached Ceylon, where also there was no little trouble over it. Now it is lying safe. The Ceylonese have kept good historical records of themselves, not like those of ours—merely cock and bull stories. And the Buddhist scriptures also are well preserved here in the ancient Magadhi dialect. From here the Buddhist religion has spread to Burma, Siam and other countries. The Buddhists of Ceylon recognise only Sakyamuni, mentioned in their scriptures, and try to follow his precepts. They do not like the people of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Ladak, China, and Japan, worship Siva, and do not know the worship with mystical Mantras of such Goddesses as Tara Devi and so forth. But they believe in possession by spirits and things of that sort.

The Buddhists have now split into two schools, the Northern and the Southern; the Northern school calls itself the Mahāyāna, and the Southern school, comprising the Ceylonese, Burmese, Siamese etc., the Hinayāna. The Mahāyāna branch only worship Buddha in name, their real worship is of Tara Devi and of Avalokiteswara (whom the Japanese, Chinese and Koreans call Kuan-yin); and there is much use of various cryptic rites and Mantras. The Tibetans are the real demons of Siva. They all worship Hindu Gods, play the Damarit,* keep human skulls, blow horns made of the bones of dead monks, are much given to wine and meat, and are always exorcising evil spirits and curing diseases by means of mystical incantations. In China and Japan, on the walls of all the temples I have observed various monosyllabic Mantras written in big gilt letters, which approach the Bengali characters so much that you can easily make out the resemblance. * *

* An hour-glass shaped tabour.

Gradually Tamilian Hindus from the north began slowly to migrate into Ceylon. The Buddhists finding themselves in untoward circumstances, left their capital to establish a hill-station called Kandy, which, too, the Tamilians wrested from them in a short time and placed a Hindu king on the throne. Then came hordes of Europeans,—the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Dutch. Lastly the English have made themselves rulers of the land. * *

In northern Ceylon there is a great majority of Hindus, while in the southern part, the Buddhists and hybrid Eurasians of different types preponderate. The principal seat of the Buddhists is Colombo, the present capital, and that of the Hindus is Jaffna. The restrictions of caste are here much less than in India; the Buddhists have a few in marriage affairs, but none in matters of food, in which respect the Hindus observe some restrictions. All the butchers of Ceylon were formerly Buddhists; now their number is decreasing owing to the revival of Buddhism. Most of the Buddhists are now changing their anglicised titles for native ones.

All the Hindu castes have mixed together and formed a single Hindu caste, in which, like the Punjabi Jats, one can marry a girl of any caste,—even a European girl for the matter of that. The son goes into a temple, puts the sacred trilinear mark on the forehead, utters "Siva, Siva," and

becomes a Hindu. The husband may be a Hindu, while the wife is a Christian. The Christian rubs some sacred ash on the forehead, utters "Namah Parvati-pataye" (Salutation to Siva!) and straightway becomes a Hindu. This is what has made the Christian missionaries so cross with you. Since your coming into Ceylon, many Christians, putting sacred ash on their forehead and repeating "Salutation to Siva," have become Hindus and gone back to their caste. Advaitavada and Vira-Saivavada are the prevailing religions here. In place of the word 'Hindu' one has to say 'Saiva.' The religious dance and Sankirtana which Sri Chaitanya introduced into Bengal had their origin in the South, among the Tamil race. The Tamil of Ceylon is pure Tamil and the religion of Ceylon is equally pure Tamil religion. That ecstatic chant of a hundred thousand men, and their singing of devotional hymns to Siva, the noise of a thousand *mridangas*[†] with the metallic sound of big cymbals, and the frenzied dance of the ash-covered, red-eyed athletic Tamilians with stout rosaries of Rudraksha beads on their neck, looking just like the great devotee, Hanuman,—you can form no idea of these, unless you personally see the phenomenon.

† A small drum.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SO innumerable are the diversities of human nature and so multifarious are the minute differences and peculiarities of the individuals, that it is not possible for any institution to minister to all the needs

and satisfy the various aims and aspirations of each separate unit. The utmost that organisations and societies can do is to contribute to the general welfare of their members. Thus no human institution

can be expected to be perfect in details and the Hindu social structure, the so-called caste system, is no exception to the rule. Its greatest achievement lay in the fact that it tried to place the society under the guidance of culture, controlled by spiritual ideals and achievements, instead of making wealth and power the main criteria of division into classes. Besides, it attempted to bridge the racial gulf and unify the various apparently discordant elements by making them inseparable and interdependent members of a grand humanising system and thereby succeeded in minimising the struggle for animal existence and its inevitable dire consequences, which have been the greatest cause of the misery and ruin of the poor and the weak among God's creatures.

Endless have been the controversies among scholars about the ancient home of the Aryans. In spite of the divergent theories of the philologists and the ethnologists, even in the oldest records that have been handed down to the Hindus uninterrupted by social and political revolutions, we search in vain to find that the Indo-Aryans migrated into India from any foreign land. But whether their original home was in the Arctic regions or in Central Asia or on the shores of the Baltic Sea as some patriotic European scholars would have us believe, it is an undisputed fact that the Aryans never settled down in India by threatening to exterminate the aborigines, as has been generally the case in those vast territories colonised by the modern civilised races of Europe. No doubt there were occasional fights and wars with the Dasyus, Dasas, Rakshasas and other tribes and races but that the Aryans made themselves masters of the land by clearing it of the primeval children of the

soil, is no better than a mere fanciful guess after the analogy of the method followed by the white colonists who have wrested the lands inhabited by the Red-Indians, the Negroes, the Bushmen and other unfortunate peoples.

Had the ancient Aryans been guided by a similar policy it would not have been possible for them to develop the grand fabric of their civilisation, with its conglomeration of diverse ethnic groups in various stages of culture, divided into *Varnas*, supporting and strengthening one another. The institution of caste in principle was meant to be the great factor of protection against aggrandisement and exploitation of the weak by the strong and powerful. Besides, this division into *Varnas* prevented the admixture of alien blood that might be brought about by indiscriminate marriage and helped to preserve the purity of type and culture.

The enforcement of the culture of one race upon another, menacing the distinctive civilisation of the less powerful nation, has been the method followed by the West, but the wonderful genius of the Hindus discovered a better and more peaceful way to spread their cultural influence, eliminating as far as possible strife and competition and thereby enabling all to develop themselves in their own way without losing their individual characteristics and vital peculiarities. The Indo-Aryans made Sanskrit, the great sacred language, the common source of inspiration and development of all the languages that were spoken by the multifarious people that came within the pale of Hinduism. And the most essential principles of religion became the common background of all these races, who could freely

keep to their distinctive manners and customs that were especially suited to their progress towards the common ideal more and more. By placing spiritual development as the common goal of all, to be attained through gradual evolution that would be brought about by the performance of *Svadharma* or one's own duties, based on the inherent capacity and tendency, did the ancient Aryas try to unite the different races and tribes with a success that appears to be nothing short of marvellous to an unbiased student of the institution of caste. It was in this noble and humane way that the spiritualisation and assimilation of diverse races followed.

High were the principles of the Hindu socio-religious structure. But owing to various adverse circumstances, national calamities and the weakness and ambition of those who were the custodians of learning and spirituality, they could not be fully carried out into practice. The work stopped before it could attain the aspired end of its evolution and progress. However, neither the downright condemnation of the system judging it by its present mummified form and the various iniquities that have come to be associated with it, nor the advocacy of its complete destruction without supplanting it by a better one will lead to the real solution of the problem which confronts the Hindu Society of the modern times.

The present deplorable exclusiveness of Hinduism, the unjustifiable distinction of privileges, the objectionable doctrines of contamination by touch and even by sight, the terrible social tyranny to which the lower classes and especially the so-called 'untouchables' have been subjected, are nothing but non-essentials that have

gathered during the period of decline and stagnation and stand in direct opposition to the principles of the Vedic Religion. The records found in the Samhitas and other Vedic literature, as well as in the Itihasas, Puranas and the later religious history of India, bear clear testimony to the fact that though even at a very early period caste became hereditary to a great extent it was elastic enough to admit non-Hindus within the fold of Hinduism and also raise the lower *Varnas* to the higher ones whenever the necessity presented itself. In the West the unit of society is the individual but here it is the community that is the unit, so that though individuals were from time to time taken into the superior castes, it generally happened that whole communities underwent this sort of elevation. All along as occasions arose this process of fusion was going on more or less, and occupation generally determined the place of these communities in the various strata of the Hindu Society, which accepted them at the outset as a sub-caste under one of the main divisions.

In ancient India there were races and tribes called by various appellations,—the Dasyus, Rakshasas, Yakshas, Nagas etc., with whom the Aryans had to wage war at times. Where are they? Have they been removed from the face of the earth or did they die a natural death being unable to cope with the stronger in the struggle for existence? The evidence of history shows without any doubt that they have been Aryanised so thoroughly that it is an impossible task now to distinguish them from the other members. And it is religion that accomplished this work by holding spiritual and ethical achievements as the highest goal of life,

thus diverting the energy that would have otherwise found expression in aggression and struggle for political and economic supremacy.

It is an object-lesson to the world how the Hindu civilisation had been successful to a great extent in bringing peace and harmony among the apparently irreconcilable and heterogeneous elements, and thus by its spirit of toleration and all-embracing love it demonstrated its inherent capacity to become a world-culture. It is not that race-consciousness and a sense of cultural superiority did not present themselves to the ancient Aryans, but these they generally transcended, as the ideal they had in view was not material but spiritual. Because the master-minds that guided the destiny of the nation were men who realised the fundamental unity of mankind, nay more, also of animals, and plants and even of the so-called dead, dull matter, for they saw the whole universe

to be the manifestation of the Spirit,—
‘सर्वे खल्वद् ब्रह्म’—“All this is Brahman.”

Such are the noble principles that underlie Hinduism. But the difference between the ideals and their translation into actual life has been very great indeed, especially in comparatively modern times. It is useless, nay, injurious, to try to feed and rear the Hindu society on the memory of the achievements of the past however great. Time has come when the Hindus should shake off the deplorable self-complacency that has overtaken them, see things as they are and be ready to face the bare facts however unpleasant they may be. A proper diagnosis of the present condition of the society is absolutely necessary to prescribe the right means that would free the social organism from its many diseases, physical as well as moral, that are eating into its very vitals, and ensure the health of the system which is quite indispensable for its development.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT WORLD-TEACHER.*

TO-DAY is the day of great rejoicing, a day of new hope, new enthusiasm, new light.

Many God-intoxicated souls and sages came to bless us with their message and presence, but none was greater in Divine manifestation than he who came as Sri Ramakrishna. He came to India, but no country can say, he is ours. The Divine life cannot be limited in any way by claims of sect and country.

We must study this great life, universal

in its aspect. From such a study every denomination or sect can turn to study their own from a broader standpoint. In order to understand such a messenger of light we have to stop all the ordinary ideas and activities of our mind that the Divine in us may take control, and in that high state of serenity we can better understand such a life.

Some may ask, why this celebration? Why not seek the Truth or worship God in our own homes? No, that is not sufficient. It is in such celebrations that our hearts and minds get the necessary expansion, fresh stimulus, fresh awakening, with

* An address delivered on the 86th Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California.

which to work out our life's problems. There are times in life when progress seems to have come to an end. Then we need such inspirations from such a life to renew our failing strength and aspiration. These great lives are productive of the greatest good in all ages—their divine power lifts us out of all worldly conditions. Such blessed occasions as these make us feel brother and sister to all humanity and awakens true love for every living being.

At periods in the world's history the material side of life gains the ascendancy—business and social activities—attention to the necessities of life—all engross the mind and plunge it deeper and deeper into the darkness of materialism. Gradually then religion sinks into a name,—a mere discussion—sinks to a low ebb. When it is at the lowest, a tidal wave is seen and on its crest appears a shining messenger of light.

In this way—out of an humble wayside village of Bengal—came such a messenger of light to bless the world, in the person of Sri Ramakrishna. What wonder our hearts flow in gratitude to this messenger who came to unite all the warring sects in one great wave of devotion, in whom all—Muhammedans and Christians alike—could see their ideal!

There must be some form of manifestation to prove any truth. Humanity can only understand that which it sees in concrete form, especially so in Divine manifestation. That is the greatness of

these messengers of light manifesting before humanity—their greatest power—to show their Divinity—to remain in the state of God-consciousness.

The purpose of life is to become Divine and when we see a Divine life concretised, manifesting the most sublime Divine power, our soul is translated, we become transformed. Their mere touch gives God-consciousness to the soul.

The great message of all the Divine teachers and prophets is—you are Divine and you *can* become Divine in consciousness.

From childhood Sri Ramakrishna knew his mission, but as a God-man and a world-teacher he had to go through all phases of religion. He took up all faiths and practised them to the end to show to every sincere soul that the goal of all was the same Truth.

So, our heart's gratitude and that of all humanity should go out to such a great soul. This great life should inspire us to live the Divine life and stand before others as living examples. His message comes to us like a tonic, to see God in all and then we shall surely find Him in ourselves.

So, on this blessed occasion let us forget all our little differences and troubles and, sitting before this altar, may we consecrate the altar of our heart and like the beautiful flowers at his feet, open up and shed its love to all the world!

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA.

THE BAUDDHA PHILOSOPHY.

GAUTAMA Buddha was deeply impressed with the miseries of this world and the sufferings of humanity. He was quick to realise the vanity of all earthly

good and found out that rebirth, decay and death were inevitable according to the law of Karma. The origin of this life is due to Karma which in its turn arises from

ignorance. He, therefore, wanted to find out a path out of misery—a path which all could follow and thus save themselves from the bondage of life and death. He preached a religion of self-restraint and self-culture and did not trouble himself much about metaphysical doctrines or dogmas. To live a holy life free from passions and desires and thereby put an end to this worldly suffering was his main tenet. Life is full of suffering and the causes of this suffering are passions and desires. The only way out of this misery is the annihilation of these, which could be attained only by a holy life—a life lived according to the tenets of Buddhism that would lead to Nirvana by rooting out Karma with its mistaken clinging to life.

Nirvana is deliverance from all sorrows and troubles, a state wherein the thirst for life and its pleasures which brings on new births has ceased to exist, and wherein man enjoys perfect peace. Buddha did not trouble himself about points which he considered beyond the grasp of the human mind and with reference to these questions he did not commit himself though often pressed by his disciples. He used to reply to such questions, "Here you are in the midst of suffering, and here lies the way out of it, try to free yourself from this first by following the path. What avails it to discuss on such abstruse philosophical points?" He thus avoided all the speculative theories of the Vedic Religion from which he took the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. These two doctrines together with an ethical code formed his religion that was easy to be understood by all as it was unhampered by ceremonials or metaphysical doctrines which later on the Buddhists introduced with a vengeance. But this neglect of metaphysics and a well-seasoned philosophy is

one of the chief causes that led to its downfall in India for she has always been a land of philosophy, and no religion without such a basis can stand in this country.

Some three or four centuries after Buddha his followers could not hold their own against the onslaught of the Brahmins. They found out that unless their religion was given a metaphysical basis there was no hope for them as against Vedanta and Brahminism. They exerted their utmost in this direction and thus resulted the various schools of the Buddhist Philosophy.

All the Buddhist schools recognise direct perception and inference as the only two sources of knowledge and they are all based on an utterance of Buddha—

सर्वं कृतिकं कर्तिकं, दुःखं दुःखं, स्वलक्षणं स्वलक्षणं, गूढं गूढं।

"All is momentary, momentary; all is pain, pain; all is like itself alone, all is like itself alone; all is void, void." The first three points are accepted by all of them though the last one is accepted only by the Mâdhyamikas.

The Buddhistas declare that all things are impermanent. Everything that is and every event that happens pass away for ever; they die but yet they continue for ever in the effect they produce. Life is fleeting but the actions done remain. The duration of life of a living being is extremely brief, for it lasts only while a thought lasts. As soon as that thought ceases, the being is said to have ceased to exist and a new personality to come into existence inheriting the experiences of the former. The impermanence of all things they infer from their existence as follows:

Whatever exists is momentary.

All things exist.

All things are, therefore, momentary.

How do we know that all things exist? A thing is said to exist when it produces effects or exerts practical efficiency. Thus to exist is to be an active cause and we know by direct perception that this is true of all things. Hence, all things exist. Again, practical efficiency is the process of becoming and, therefore, something active, and becoming is either successive or simultaneous. These two terms are excluded from anything which is permanent since they show change. Therefore existence which coincides with these terms is excluded from permanence. Hence all things that exist are momentary.

Having established the impermanence of all existing objects the Buddhas proceed to show that the universals which are in their nature unchanging and eternal cannot exist. They recognise only the particular, the individual, change alone as existing. If the universal exists, is it present or not in the many? If it is not, then it cannot be a universal. If it is, what is the evidence? For we do not see any such common existence or form running through the diverse and heterogeneous momentary things like mustard seeds, mountains &c. Again let us take the nature of a jar (पत्र) which pervades all jars and so can be said to be a universal. What becomes of this when the jar is destroyed? Does it survive the jar or not? If it does not, then it cannot be a universal, for it is not eternal since it is destroyed. If it does, then it must be without an object to inhere in. The universal, therefore, does not exist.

A natural result of such a doctrine of impermanence is the absolute denial of an Atman or soul. The Vedanta teaches of an Atman in every being which is characterised as absolute, immutable, eternal &c.

This Atman, the Vedanta says, is erroneously identified with the ego-idea in expressions like 'I am fat,' 'This is mine.' This view is rejected by the Buddhists. They deny a separate permanent individuality distinct from the character of man. They say there are not two things—the Atman and the phenomenon. The latter alone is true and Atman is nothing but the Karma at a particular moment. We have only a bundle of formations. From this we cannot get any being, though we are apt to call it a being when the aggregates are there. Everything changes and within our organised life there is no eternal germs. In other words, the Buddhist says that there is only a phenomenal world and that we have no right to posit a noumenal world behind it. To this the Vedantin would reply that he never says that there are two realities, the phenomenal and the noumenal. There is one. Seen through the senses it is phenomenal but it is all the time in reality noumenal. The man who sees the rope does not see the snake. He sees either the rope or the snake and never both. So the Buddhist criticism that the Vedantin talks of two worlds as existing is entirely without any basis. Anyway, the Buddhist seems to have no objection to the convenient notion whereby we speak of ourselves as 'I' or 'self,' for his contention is against the fact that it has any counterpart in reality.

The Buddhists do not accept a soul and yet they talk of transmigration. What is it, then, that takes renewed births? They say it is Karma. Birth is not rebirth but a new birth, transfer of Karma that never dies. It must produce its own effects. So when one man dies another is born in his place with his predecessor's Karma. As one generation of a nation

inherits the good and evil of its predecessors, so each individual in this continuous stream of life inherits the good and evil of its predecessor and proceeds on his onward march towards Nirvana. When by following the "Eightfold Path," ignorance is destroyed and Karma rooted out, there will be nothing left which, when a man is dissolved in death, could bring forth another being in his place. Thus the Buddhist believes that his present state is due to his past Karma. But a question may arise: wherein is the identity between the two—the predecessor and his follower who takes up the burden of the former? The Buddhist says, "In that which alone remains when a man dies, in his action, thought etc., in his Karma which cannot die." Reincarnation appears to bring into existence new individuals, but they are the same as the former incarnations from which they spring according to the law of Karma; just as a lamp when allowed to blaze up and set fire to a thatch, the fire that burns the house is different from the flame of the lamp and yet it is the flame of the lamp which burns down the house. The two fires are different yet not different in a way.

When Ananda asked Buddha, "What is meant, Lord, by the phrase 'the world is empty,'" Buddha replied, "That it is empty, Ananda, of a self. And what is it that is thus empty! The five seats of the five senses and the mind and the feeling that is related to mind—all these are void of a self or of anything that is self-like."* Again to the listening disciples he says— "Since neither self nor aught belonging to self can really and truly exist, the view which holds that this I who am the world,

who am self, shall hereafter live permanent, persisting, eternal, unchanging, yea, abide eternally—is not this utterly and entirely a foolish doctrine?"† Here we have two texts from the Buddhist scriptures which deny the existence of a self. Though generally the Buddhists quote such texts as authority to show that Buddha himself denied the existence of a soul, it seems to be a controversial point whether Buddha really denied an Atman in the above passages. He must have denied the soul as popularly understood, in other words, he must have denied this little self of ours, the ego-consciousness, the 'I' and 'mine,' which is erroneously confounded with the Atman and which in fact has no reality in it. His voice was raised against the glorification of the separateness of the individual. It is doubtful whether he had any objection to the losing of all separateness in the Atman, the One Existence, as the following passage tends to show—"There is no such thing as an individuality which is permanent; even were a permanent individuality possible, it would be undesirable, for it is not desirable to be separate. The effort to keep oneself separate may succeed indeed for a time; but so long as it is successful it involves limitation and therefore ignorance and therefore pain. No! it is not separateness you should hope for, it is union--the sense of oneness with all that now is, that has ever been, that can ever be—the sense that shall enlarge the horizon of your being to the limits of the universe, to the boundaries of time and space, that shall lift you up into a new plane far beyond, outside all mean and miserable care for self. Why stand shrinking there? Give up the

* Buddhism by Mrs. Rhys Davids.

† Buddhism by Mrs. Rhys Davids.

fool's paradise of 'This is I,' 'This is mine.' It is a real fact—the greatest of realities—that you are asked to grasp. Leap forward without fear! You shall find yourself in the ambrosial waters of

Nirvana and sport with the Arhats who have conquered birth and death."† One step forward and we are in the realm of the Advaita philosophy and not in Buddhism.

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CLXXXV.

Almora.
11th July, 1897.

My dear S—,

I was very glad to receive your last report. I have very little criticism to make except that you ought to write a bit more legibly.

I am quite satisfied with the work done as yet, but it must be pushed forward. I have not learnt as yet of the suggestion I made before as to getting a set of Chemical and Physical apparatus and starting classes in elementary and experimental Chemistry and Physics, especially in Physiology.

What about the other suggestion of buying sets of all the scientific books that have been translated into Bengali?

It now seems to me that there must at least be three Mohants (Heads) elected at a time,—one to direct the business part, one the experimental, the other the intellectual part.

The difficulty is to get the director of education! B— and T— may well fill the other two. Of visitors I am sorry to learn that you are only getting Babus from Calcutta. They are no good. What we want are brave young men, who will work; not tomfools.

Ask B— to write to both A— and S— to send weekly reports to the Math without fail, also to send Bengali articles and things for the would-be paper. Is G. C. Ghose getting up things for the paper? Work on with a will and be ready.

1A— is working wonderfully at Mahula, but the system is not good. It seems they are frittering away their energies in one

little village and that to only doling out rice. I do not hear that any preaching has been done along with this helping. All the wealth of the world cannot help one little Indian village if the people are not taught to help themselves. Our work should be mainly educational, both moral and intellectual. I have not learnt anything about it—only so many beggars are helped! Ask B— to open centres in different districts so as to cover the largest space, with our small means.

And then so far it seems to have been ineffectual, for they have not succeeded in rousing the people of the place to start societies to educate the people, so that they may learn to be self-reliant, frugal and not given to marrying, and thus save themselves from future famine. Charity opens the heart, but work on through that wedge.

The easiest way is to take a hut—make it into a temple of Guru Maharaj. Let the poor come there to be helped, also to worship. Let there be Kathā (Puranic recitals) morning and evening there—through that you may teach all you want to teach the people. By degrees the people will be interested, they will keep up the temple themselves, maybe the hut-temple will evolve into a great institution in a few years. Let those that go to relief-work first select a central spot in each district and start such a hut-temple, from which all our little work is to proceed. †

† Buddhism by Mr. Rhys Davids.

Even the greatest fool can accomplish a task if it be after his heart. But the intelligent man is he who can convert every work into one that suits his taste. No work is petty. Everything in this world is like a banyan-seed, which though appearing tiny as a mustard-seed, has yet the gigantic banyan tree latent within it. He indeed is intelligent who notices this and succeeds in making all work truly great.*

Moreover they have to see that cheats do not get the food of the deserving. India is full of lazy rogues and curions, they never die of hunger, they always get something. Ask B— to write this to everyone in relief-work—they must not be allowed to spend money on no good. We want the greatest possible good work permanent from the least outlay.

Now you see you must try to think out

original ideas—else as soon as I die, the whole thing will tremble to pieces. For example, you hold a meeting to consider, "How we can reap the best permanent results out of the small means at our disposal." Let all have notice a few days before and let each suggest something and discuss all the suggestions, criticising them, and then send me a report.

Lastly, you must remember I expect more from my children than from my brethren. I want each one of my children to be a hundred times greater than what I could ever be. Everyone of you *must be a giant*—must, that is my word. Obedience, readiness, and love for the cause—if you have these three, nothing can hold you back.

With love and blessings,

—?

Vivekananda.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

The Latter's Method of Examining Disciples.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S "LILAPRASANGA."]

(Continued from page 129.)

We have narrated to the reader before that noticing the extraordinary signs and traits of greatness in Narendranath, Sri Ramakrishna from the very beginning judged him as possessing a great spiritual calibre, and captured him through his pure unselfish love,—and then set about instructing him on spiritual matters. We now desire to record how and in what ways Sri Ramakrishna tested him during the days of his discipleship.

Sri Ramakrishna told Keshab Chandra on the occasion of the split in his Brahmo Samaj over the matter of the Cooch-Behar marriage: "You add to the number of your followers by admitting anybody and everybody without examination and it

is no wonder that your Samaj breaks up. I do not accept anybody without testing him." One cannot but be struck with great wonder to think how he examined the devotees who would come to him, in many ways known and unknown to them. One is made to think how he, who made himself known to the world as an illiterate man, could master so many wonderful methods of gauging human character. Is it due to the self-illumination in his present life of the knowledge acquired in past lives, or to the result of supersensuous vision and omniscience of the Rishihood attained through his Sadhana, or to the special reason of his being an incarnation of the Divinity as sometimes he would speak of himself to the inner circle of his devotees? Although many thoughts like these arise in the mind, we do not proceed to decide the

* This para only is translated from Bengali.

question here but leave the decision on the subject to the reader and go on to relate as far as possible the actual facts as they happened.

If we mention a few incidents, the reader will be able to comprehend the unusual nature of the many means which Sri Ramakrishna adopted to understand the character of a person ; but before doing this it is necessary to know a few facts about the subject. We have seen that when any person would come to Sri Ramakrishna, he would look at him in a specially attentive manner. If his mind would thus be attracted towards the visitor, he would enter into spiritual talks with him and ask him to see him occasionally. As days passed on and the man used to visit him, Sri Ramakrishna would, unknown to him, observe the shape of his body and limbs, the nature of his thoughts and the measure of his desire for sense-enjoyment and attachment to lust and gold, the extent to which the person felt attached to him, as would be manifest in his movements and expressions. From the minute observations of these he would arrive at a sure conclusion about his latent spirituality. Thus from a few days' visit Sri Ramakrishna would be sure about the man's character. If he felt the necessity of knowing any hidden facts of his inner being, he would know it by his keen *yogic* vision. About this matter he once told us thus : " In the small hours of the morning while, awake and alone, I think of the spiritual welfare of you all, the Divine Mother shows and lets me know how far one has advanced in the spiritual path, why another cannot progress, etc." From the above words of Sri Ramakrishna let not the reader conclude that his *yogic* power was awake only then. From his talks at other times we can understand that at will he could ascend to high spiritual states of consciousness and obtain similar visions. For he said—" Just as by looking at a glass almirah one can see all the things that are inside, so looking at a man I can know his inmost thoughts, tendencies and all other things."

Thus proceeding to examine the human character generally in the way described above, he was seen to depart from it in the case of his special devotees. One notices that his first meeting with them was brought about by divine dispensation while he was in high spiritual moods. We have narrated before that through his wonderful spiritual prac-

tices Sri Ramakrishna's mind and body became wonderfully fit instruments for the retention and communication of subtle spiritual forces. This was literally verified during the period of his ministry. We always observed that his mind became coloured according to the spiritual thoughts working within the devotees and would in their presence rise to whatever spiritual level they had been able to ascend as the result of their previous Karma and Samskaras, and gather therefrom all the facts of their inner life. The visions and realisations which came to Sri Ramakrishna on the occasion of the first visit of Narendranath, which has been previously narrated will enable the reader to understand the above fact.

But it is not that he never applied the ordinary methods of examining the human character with regard to his very intimate disciples. During his normal moods he observed their ways, movements and conversations and did not rest satisfied until he similarly examined even Narendranath.

The ways he adopted to examine the character of his devotees may be classified under four heads :

1. Sri Ramakrishna would ascertain the strong past tendencies of the devotees coming to him, by observing the signs and physiognomy of the body. Physiology and psychology of the present day have proved that every definite thought translated into physical action leaves an impress on the brain and the body, and so we also have come to believe in the signs of the body as being indices to character. The Vedas and other scriptures, however, have always affirmed the same fact. The Srutis, Smritis, Puranas, the philosophies and other scriptures of the Hindus have unanimously declared that the mind builds up the body and according to the thoughts of a man flowing in directions good or bad, his physiognomy is transformed and assumes a form corresponding to the nature of his thoughts. Therefore, many proverbs are current among us about ascertaining the internal nature of a man from the forms and features of his body and limbs; and, therefore, on occasions of marriage, initiation and other ceremonies it is considered absolutely necessary to examine the hands, feet and other members as also the general feature of the whole body.

It is no wonder that Sri Ramakrishna, a believer as he was in all the Shastras, should examine the

forms and features of the body and the limbs of his disciples. In course of conversations he would relate so many facts about this matter that we used to wonder how he could have all these experiences about the subject. We thought—was there any ancient book on the subject, reading or hearing from which he could gather his knowledge? * * Wonder-struck we would hear him describing the forms and features of the human body with its various parts as having the shapes of particular objects of everyday life and mentioning the indications which they afforded of the inner nature. About the human eye he would say, "Some have eyes like lotus-flowers, some like a bull's eyes, some possess the eyes of a *yogi* or a *deva*," and remark—"Persons having eyes like the lotus have good and spiritual tendencies within them; those with eyes like the bull's possess strong sex-passions. The *yogi*'s eye has an upward look and is of a reddish tinge; the divine eye is not very large but is long or reaches up to the ear. He who while talking casts a side glance or looks from the corner of the eye is by nature more intelligent than ordinary men." Or again, raising the topic of the form of the body he would say, "Persons of a devotional temperament have naturally a soft body and the joints of their hands and feet are pliant (i. e. can be easily moved) and even if they be lean, the muscles and tendons of their body are so shaped that not many cones and angles of their body are visible." Speaking of any as an intelligent person, in order to ascertain whether his intelligence was of a good or evil turn, he would feel the weight of his hand from elbow to fingers holding it in his own, and

if the weight was less than ordinary he would conclude that the tendency was good. An instance of Sri Ramakrishna's ascertaining the good or evil disposition of a man we received one day in the following way :—When Sri Ramakrishna was staying in the Cossipore garden suffering from cancer in the throat, the younger brother, since deceased, of the present writer came one day to visit Sri Ramakrishna. He was much pleased to see the brother, and making him sit down near him and questioning him about various things gave him many a spiritual instruction. When the present writer came near Sri Ramakrishna, he asked him, "Is he your younger brother?" And on the writer's answering in the affirmative, Sri Ramakrishna said, "He is a fine boy and more intelligent than you. Let me see if he is with a good or bad tendency," and saying this he held his hand in his own and feeling the weight said, "Yes, of a good tendency." Again questioning the writer and pointing to his younger brother said, "Shall I draw him (that is, draw his mind away from the world and turn it towards God)? What do you say?" The writer said, "Yes Sir, please do so." Sri Ramakrishna thinking a while said, "No, no more, I have taken one brother and if I take this one also, your parents would be much grieved, specially your mother. In my life I have displeased many a Shakti (woman, the embodiment of the creative and sustaining power of the Mother of the universe) and there is no need of displeasing any more." Saying this he gave him some spiritual instructions and making him partake of some food allowed him to take leave that day.

(To be continued.)

HYMNS OF THE TAMIL SAIVITE SAINTS.*

THE impact of the Eastern and Western civilisations and religions as it has been followed by the fruitful interchange of ideas and ideals is consciously, or unconsciously bringing about a great change in the thought-life of

both the Oriental and Occidental nations. It is the most hopeful sign of the times that with the increase of knowledge and consequent broadening of vision both have commenced to come to a mutual better understanding.

Unfortunately many bigoted Christian missionaries are more or less responsible for much of the wrong notions that the people of the West entertain about the Hindu religion, manners and customs, for

* The Heritage of India Series. By F. Kingsbury S. A., and G. E. Phillips M. A. Published by the Association Press, 5 Russel Street, Calcutta. Pp. 132. Price Cloth, Re. 1-8; Paper Re. 1.

It seems, they want to further the cause of Christianity mainly through calumny and misrepresentation of facts. But the vast mass of literature that has thus been written by revilers of Hinduism and published by the Christian Literature Society of India and similar organisations, very few Hindus ever cared to take notice of, much less read.

We are glad to find that a band of liberal-spirited Christians who seem to have a sympathetic view of Indian cultures and religions, has undertaken to publish, to quote from the editorial preface of the book under review, "a series of cheap books planned and written by a group of Christian men that every educated Indian, whether rich or poor, may be able to find his way into the treasures of India's past. Many Europeans, both in India and elsewhere, will doubtless be glad to use the series."

Little is known outside South India about the very rich religious literature in the ancient Tamil language and the present volume, we are sure, will help the reader to form an idea of its wealth and grandeur. The book contains selected hymns of four of the great Saivite Saints of the South printed in Tamil characters along with their English rendering in verse—hymns that are sung in the homes and temples all over the Tamil country. No doubt much of the charm of the songs we miss in the translation but the authors have spared no pains to mainiain as far as possible in a foreign tongue the spirit of the original.

" Thou art right and Thou art wrong

Kinsman, I to Thee belong ;
Never fades Thy light away.
Thou the sense of books divine.
Thou my wealth, my bliss art Thou,
Thou my all, and in Thy shrine
With what praises can I bow ?"—

Thus does Saint Sambandar sing the glory of Siva.

His well-known benedictory verse is often set on the front page of Tamil books :—

" Blest be the Brahmanas pure, the heavenly ones and kine.
Cool rain fall on the earth ! May the king's glory shine !
Perish all forms of ill ! Let Hara's name resound !
May sorrow pass away, from earth's remotest bound !"

To Saint Apparswami, Siva was all in all and he expresses himself in a beautiful verse :—

" Thou to me art parents, Lord,
Thou all kinsmen that I need,
Thou to me art loved ones fair,
Thou art treasure rich indeed.
Family, friends, home att Thou,
Life and joy I draw from Thee,
False world's good by Thee I leave,
Gold, pearl, wealth art Thou to me."

Life has no reality and God alone is real—sq does Saint Sundaramurti sing :

" Our life is all unreal,
Its end is only dust,
Out of the sea of birth
Come ruin, pain and lust."

* * * * *
" Clad in the loin-cloth, my body with
holy ash white,
Lo ! I have come to Thy foot ; O my head, I
beseech Thee, take me.

* * * * *
Friend, 'tis on Thee, none but Thee,
Can my heart evermore fixed be."

Saint Manikka Vasahar's songs are almost without any parallel, as a common Tamil saying says that nothing can melt the heart of the man who is not melted by his devotional songs.

" Thou gav'st Thyself, Thou gained'st me ;
Which did the better bargain drive ?
Bliss found I in infinity ;
But what didst Thou from me derive ?
* * * * *
My mind Thou tookest for Thy shrine ;
My very body's Thine abode :
What can I give Thee, Lord, of mine ?"

These are the words of the devotee who expresses his inability to make any return for the Lord's infinite grace.

Wealth, name and fame the true Bhakta abhorred and he asked nothing but love and yearning for his God :—

" I ask not kin, nor name, nor place.
Nor learned men's society.

Men's lore for me no value has ;

* * * * *
Wilt Thou one boon on me bestow,
A heart to melt in longing sweet,
As yearns o'er new-born calf the cow,
In yearning for Thy sacred feet ?"

The Lord's mercy towards His devotee is unconditional. The Bhakta who is once blessed to

get the taste of His love and beauty cannot but always long for union with Him :—

" I had no virtue, penance, knowledge, self-control,
But me

He filled in every limb
With love's mad longing, and that I might climb
there whence is no return,
He shewed His beauty, made me His. Ah me,
when shall I go to Him ? "

May we, also, be able thus to send our constant prayer to the Lord !

It would have been very desirable had the translators resisted the temptation of speaking " of the little childishness involved in idolatry " while introducing Manikka Vasahar's songs invoking the Deity to rise from slumber. Idols are the symbols of God and the use of images in worship is necessary for certain types of devotees who feel in them the presence of the Deity. If the manifestation of God in idols is childish is not the same charge equally applicable to transubstantiation or consubstantiation—the actual presence of Christ in the Eucharist ? And is 'idolatry' after all worse than 'bibliolatry' and other things which we do not mention here ? We wish the editors to remove this objectionable passage in the next edition of the book.

In commenting on Apparswami's hymn describing the Saint's burning feeling of sin, the translators remark :—" It is often said, not without truth, that Hinduism fails to create a strong sense of sin. But there are great exceptions." The passage ought to have been so worded as not to make it offensive in any way. Hinduism certainly acknowledges the existence of sin in the world but does not put too much stress on it as sin cannot cure sin. It wants on the other hand to eradicate

the root-cause of all sins by awakening in man his Divine consciousness and faith in his pure and perfect nature. And this doctrine of strength is the sure remedy against all forms of human weaknesses.

We hope this work will be widely read by Hindus and Christians alike so that it may tend to remove many a misconception which is harboured about the worship of Siva in Hinduism.

Devotional songs express the spirit of worship more clearly than anything else. And the hymns composed by the Vaishnavite Saints, the devotees of Subrahmanya and the votaries of even the minor village Gods and Goddesses of South India would, if studied with an unbiased mind, show that however different the forms of worship, the spirit is much the same. Spiritual progress means a growth from within and does not consist in a mere intellectual ascent to the articles of faith of any particular sect or religion. As a devotee advances, his conception of God, as also the form of worship, undergo evolution and he proceeds step by step to a state when he no longer stands in need of any external symbols and ultimately comes to recognise the One Spirit that pervades the universe and is worshipped in various forms and by manifold names. This realisation is the fulfilment of all systems of worship and spiritual practice, however crude they may be in the initial stage. Seeing in this light alone can one understand how it is possible for even the greatest Advaita philosopher to worship the so-called hideous idols, for, to the Hindu, philosophy and religion are inseparable. Religion is applied philosophy which supplies the rationale and spirit of religion.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 164.)

भीशुक उवाच ।

एवं भगवतादिष्टा यादवाः कुलनन्दन ।

गन्तुं कृतधियस्तीर्यं स्यन्दनान्समयूयुजन् ॥३६॥

Suka said :

39. O scion¹ of the Kurus, being thus ordered by the Lord, the Yadavas made

ready their chariots with the object of going to the place of pilgrimage.

[¹Scion etc.—King Parikshit, to whom Suka narrates the incidents described in the Bhágavata.]

तच्चिरीस्योऽस्मो राजन् भुत्वा भगवतोदितम् ।
राष्ट्रारिष्टानि धोराणि नित्यं कृष्णमनुवतः ॥४०॥

विविक उपसंगस्य जगतामीश्वरेभ्रम ।

प्रश्नम्य गिरसा पादौ प्राप्तिस्तमभाषत ॥४१॥

40-41. O King, seeing this, hearing the Lord's words, and noticing dire portents, Uddhava, ever devoted to Sri Krishna, approached the Lord of the world-rulers in a retired place, and touching His feet with his head, addressed Him with folded palms.

उद्धव उवाच ।

देवदेवेण योगेण पुण्यभवणीर्तन ।

संहृतैतकुर्व नूनं लोकं संत्यस्यते भवाद् ।

विग्रहादं समर्थोऽपि प्रत्यहम् यदीश्वरः ॥४२॥

42. O Lord of the Rulers among the gods, O Lord of Yoga, O Thou Whom¹ it is auspicious to hear and talk about, surely Thou wilt quit this world after destroying this line, since Thou didst not counteract the Brahmanas' curse, even though Thou hadst the power to do it.

[¹ *Whom etc.*—because it destroys Avidya or ignorance.]

नाहं तवाङ्ग्रिकमलं चण्डार्घमपि केषव ।

त्वकुं समुत्सहे नाय स्वधाम नय मामपि ॥४३॥

43. O Kesava, not for half a second can I bear to be separated from Thy lotus-feet. Therefore, O Lord, take me also to Thy abode.¹

[¹ *Abode*—The word *dharma* also means the *swarupa*, the status or essential nature, which is its inner significance, as in verse 47.]

तव विक्रीडितं कृष्ण नृणां परममङ्गम ।

कर्णपीयुपग्रस्वाद्य त्यजत्यन्यस्पृहां जनः ॥४४॥

44. O Krishna, tasting¹ Thy sports which are conducive to the highest good of mankind and are like nectar to the ear, men give up all other desires.

[¹ *Tasting*—i. e., hearing of them.]

रथ्यासनन्दनसानसानकार्डिशनादिषु ।

कथं त्वां प्रियमात्मानं त्वयं भक्तास्त्वजेमहि ॥४५॥

45. And how can we, Thy devotees, give up Thy company in lying, sitting, walking, staying, bathing, sport, eating and so on, for Thou art dearly beloved of us, nay, our very Self?

त्वयोपभुक्त्वग्नन्धवासोबंकारचर्चिताः ।

उच्छ्रितमेजिनो दासात्तव मायां जयेमहि ॥४६॥

46. We, Thy servants, will surely conquer Thy Mâyâ, being decked in the garlands, perfumes and ornaments used by Thee, and partaking of the leavings of Thy food.¹

[¹ *Food*—Teachers of Bhakti attach great importance to this as a factor contributing to devotion.]

वाताशना य ऋषयः भ्रमणा उर्ध्वमन्धिनः ।

ब्रह्मास्यं धाम ते यान्ति शान्ताः संन्यासिनोऽमराः ॥

47. Sages who¹ live on air,² who are ascetics and observe continence, who have pacified their senses, renounced the world and are pure, reach Thy status known as Brahman.

[¹ *Who etc.*—They may undergo all these troubles to realise Brahman, but ours is a much safer and easier way,—says Uddhava.

[² *Live on air*: Another reading is वातरशनाः which means 'clothed with air,' i. e. nude.]

त्वयं त्विह महायोगिन्भ्रमन्तः कर्मवर्तमसु ।

त्वद्वार्तया तरिष्यामस्तावकैरुप्तरं तमः ॥४८॥

48. But we, O great Yogin, who wander in the world through the by-ways of work,¹ will transcend its darkness, so difficult to wade through, by conversing about Thee with Thy devotees:

[¹ *Work*: We are not so advanced people, consequently ours is the path of work, we cannot ignore our duties in life.]

स्मरन्तः कीर्तयन्तस्ते कृतानि गदितानि च ।

गत्युत्स्मितेद्वग्नस्वेति यन्नृक्तोक्तिविडम्बनम् ॥४९॥

49. Remembering and reciting Thy deeds and words, Thy movements, smiles,

glances and pleasantries in imitation of human beings.

श्रीशुक उवाच ।

एवं विश्वापितो राजन्भगवान्देवकीसुतः ।
एकान्तिनं प्रियं भूत्यमुख्यं समभापत ॥५०॥

50. Being thus appealed to, O king, Bhagavân Sri Krishna spoke to His beloved servant, Uddhava, who was all attention.

CHAPTER II

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

यद्यत्य मां महाभाग तक्षिकार्थितमेव मे ।
ब्रह्मा भवो लोकपात्राः स्वर्वासं मेऽभिकाङ्गुष्ठः ॥१॥

The Lord said:

1. What thou sayest to Me, O blessed one, is indeed what I have wished to do. Brahmâ, Shiva, and the Lords of beings desire My going back to heaven.

मया निष्पादितं शत्रु देवकार्थमरोषतः ।
यद्यैमवतीर्णोऽहमंयेन ब्रह्मणार्थितः ॥२॥

2. Indeed, I have entirely finished the task¹ of the gods for which, at the request of Brahmâ, I incarnated Myself with My partial Manifestation.²

[¹ Task—viz. the destruction of the forces of evil on earth. See Chapter I, verse 21.

²Partial Manifestation—He means Balarama, his elder brother, considered as the Incarnation of Anantadeva, who supports the universe. This interpretation (supplying सह, “with,” after अयेन) is in keeping with the accepted view, viz. that “Krishna is the Lord Himself.” (Bhagavata Skandha I, Chap. III, verse 28.)]

कुलं वै यापनिर्दग्धं न द्वयत्यन्योन्यविग्रहात् ।
समुद्रः समेऽहयेतां पुर्णं च माविष्यति ॥३॥

3. This line, which is thoroughly burnt by the curse, will come to destruction through mutual fight, and the sea will submerge this city on the seventh day.

यर्त्तेवायं मया स्यको लोकोऽयं नष्टमङ्गुष्ठः ।

भविष्यत्यचिरात्साधो कालिनार्थिं गिराकृतः ॥४॥

4. O noble soul, as soon as I leave this world, it will be shorn of its well-being, and will soon be overtaken by Kali—the spirit of the Dark Age.

न वस्तद्यं त्वयैवेह मया स्यके महीतत्वे ।

जगोऽधर्मरूचिर्भद्रं भविष्यति कलो युगे ॥५॥

5. Thou, too, shouldst not stay here after I leave the earth,—for, O good soul, men will be addicted to evil in the Iron Age:

त्वं तु सर्वं परित्यज्य लोहं स्वजगत्पूर्वुषु ।

मय्यावेश्य मनः सम्यक् समदग्निवधरस्य गाम ॥६॥

6. Giving up thy love for thy kinsmen and friends, and renouncing everything, roam thou over the world, with evenness of vision, fixing thy mind wholly in Me.

यदिदं मनसा वाचा चक्षुभ्यां भ्रवणादिभिः ।

नश्वरं गृह्णामाणं च विद्धि मायामनोमयम् ॥७॥

7. Whatever is cognised by the mind, speech, eyes, ears and the rest,—know it all to be a figment of the mind, a phantasmiagoria, and withal doomed to pass away.

पुंसोऽयुक्तस्य नानार्थो भ्रमः स गुणदोषभाक् ।

कर्मकर्म विकर्मेति गुणदोषभियो भिदा ॥८॥

8. The man of uncontrolled mind falls into the error that there is a plurality of objects, and this error leads to merit or demerit.¹ The differences of action, inaction and evil action concern only the man² who has ideas of merit and demerit.

[¹ Merit or demerit—i. e. good and evil.

² Only the man etc.—Because they are within the domain of Avidyâ or ignorance.]

तस्माद्युक्तंनिद्रियग्रामो युक्तचित्त इदं जगत् ।

आत्मनीक्षस्य विततमात्मानं मय्यधीश्वरे ॥९॥

9. Therefore, controlling thy senses and thy mind, behold this universe as

spread out¹ in the self² and behold the self as resting in Me, the Supreme Lord.

[¹ Spread out—manifested.

² Self—the individual aspect of the Atman. The universe depends on the Jiva and the Jiva has Brahman as its background.]

शानविश्वानसंयुक्त ब्रात्मभूतः यरीरिणाम् ।
ब्रात्मानुभवतुष्टात्मा नान्तरायैर्विहन्यसे ॥१०॥

10. Possessed of knowledge¹ and Realisation,² with thy mind satisfied with the Realisation of the Self, and being the very Self of all embodied beings, thou wilt not³ be thwarted by obstacles.

[¹ Knowledge—of the purport of the scriptures.

² Realisation—of the oneness of the Self.

³ Thou wilt not etc.—The idea is that prior to Realisation one should observe the duties of life, but after that one becomes the Self of all, including the gods, who naturally therefore cannot hurt the man of Realisation. Compare Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad I. iv. 10.]

दोषबुद्धोभयातीतो निषेधात्र निर्वर्तते ।
गुणबुद्धा च विहितं न करोति यथार्भकः ॥११॥

11. Beyond the reach of both merit and demerit, (such a man)¹ will, like a child,² desist from prohibited actions, but not through a sense of evil, and perform enjoined actions, but not through an idea that it will conduce to merit.

[¹ Such a man etc.—He acts on the momentum of his past good impressions or Samskāras, and never deviates, even unconsciously, from the strictly moral path. It is now his nature to do good acts and avoid evil actions. So there is no chance of his behaving according to caprice.

[² Like a child—i. e. mechanically.]

सर्वभूतसुहच्छात्मो शानविश्वाननिष्ठयः ।
पश्यन्मदात्मकं विश्वं न विपद्येत वै पुनः ॥१२॥

12. Friend of all beings, with the settled conviction due to Knowledge and Realisation, and beholding the universe as consisting of nothing but Me, (he) no more comes to grief.¹

[¹ Comes to grief—transmigrates.]

(To be continued.)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME, BANGALORE CITY

THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1920-21.

WE are glad to find that the institution has passed the second year of its useful life under its competent managing committee.

As in the past year, admission was restricted to unmarried students of the Entrance and College classes. The number of boarders at the end of the year was thirteen, whose conduct and progress was throughout satisfactory. They helped in the collection of the monthly subscriptions and also in the management of the Home as far as practicable.

The speciality of the institution is the close attention that is paid to the development of character of the boys. Swami Nirmalanandaji, the President of the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama and also of the

Home, continued to give religious instructions on the practice and principles of the Hindu religion at the Math on Sunday evenings. The morning and evening Sandhya and the worship at the Ashrama every evening were duly attended to. A new feature during the year under review was that Saturday evenings were devoted to Bhajana at the Home itself.

The total receipts including interest from deposits were Rs. 2525-10-9; and the total expenditure amounted to Rs. 1285-3-6.

We learn with pleasure that the members of the local Sir Seshadri Memorial Society have placed their library at the disposal of the Home, together with the furniture and the cash balance of Rs.

146-12-9. With this nucleus it is expected that the Home will have a useful library ere long. The committee of the Students' Home requests the managers of important periodicals to kindly supply their papers free of cost for the use of the boarders.

The Home is now situated in a rented house which is quite unsuitable to its growing needs and the president appeals for funds to build a permanent habitation for the institution. We hope the following appeal will meet with a hearty response from all lovers of education.

APPEAL FOR A BUILDING FUND.

This Home started in August 1919 under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission provides free boarding and lodging to destitute students whose number in Bangalore, as every one knows, is not small. Through the ready and generous support of the public, it has been run successfully for the past two years with ten students in the first, and thirteen in the second year; it is now entering on its third year and the management proposes to increase the strength to fifteen. The encouragement the Home has received so far, indicates how keen the need is for an institution of its kind.

The Home originally commenced in a rented house opposite to the Ramakrishna Ashrama, is now located at No. 8, Bull Temple Road, Basavangudi, at some distance from the Math. This house is too small for even the proposed strength of fifteen, is too far from the Ashrama to be efficiently under the supervision of the Swamis and has, besides, many other inconveniences. Lastly, the pressing need of the day is not mere academi-

cal education but technical education. Neither the present house nor any in the vicinity can offer any facility for a beginning in this direction, however humble it may be.

His Holiness Swami Brahmananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, who is now in our midst, has graciously been pleased to allot a portion of the Ashrama lands facing the Gavipur extention for a building for the Home. The management is anxious to avail itself of the holy presence of the President of the Mission and the Vice-President, Swami Sivananda, to place the Home on a permanent basis. The offer of a few friends to give a donation of about Rs. 500 each for rooms to be constructed after their desire, coupled with the success with which the Ramakrishna Mission centres at Madras, Benares and elsewhere have been able to conduct expensive charities through the munificence of the public and the local administrations, induces the management of the local Students' Home to appeal for a fund for a building.

A building to accommodate about 25 boarders in the first instance is estimated to cost Rs. 15,000. The management has every confidence that with kind co-operation of the generous public of the State, the proposed building will soon be an accomplished fact and it earnestly appeals to all to contribute liberally and help in the uplifting of the needy.

All contributions may kindly be marked "Building Fund" and remitted to the undersigned or to Mr. B. Venkataramanappa M. A., Treasurer.

BASVANGUDI, Bangalore City. 1st July, 1921.	}	SWAMI NIRMALANANDA.
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REVIEWS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Raja-Yoga (Bengali).—By Swami Vivekananda. Published by the Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Crown 8vo. Pp. 314+x. Price Re. 1-4.

This is the fifth edition of the Bengali translation of Swami Vivekananda's Raja-Yoga. It has been thoroughly revised by Srimat Swami Suddhananda and we are sure that the Benjali reading

public will welcome the present improved edition all the more. The book contains a portrait of the author in Yoga posture and an illustrative picture of the Six Chakras as designed by him.

Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lilaprasanga (Bengali)— By Swami Saradananda. In Five Volumes. Second Edition. Published by the Udbodhan

Office, Calcutta. Crown 8vo. Price Complete Set Rs. 6-12.

It is the most comprehensive life of Sri Ramakrishna, covering more than 1500 pages, written in Bengali by one of his chosen disciples and is, therefore, a faithful exposition of the life and teachings of the Great Master, that breathed the spirit of universal love and toleration. The author's vivid description of the events and the subtle analysis of the inner life of Sri Ramakrishna are unique and the work, therefore, helps the readers to understand the real significance of the far-reaching spiritual life. The book contains several illustrations. The parts can be had separately.

A Manual of Higher Hindi Grammar and Composition. Part I. (Through the medium of English.) By Shibnarayan Lala, Professor of Hindi Language and Literature, Scottish Churches College, Calcutta. To be had of Messrs. Goldquin & Co., College Street Market, Calcutta. Crown 8vo. Pp. 199. Price Re. 1-4.

We have much pleasure in going through this well-written volume from the pen of one who has a thorough knowledge of the subject he is treating of, both on account of his Professorial duties and those of an examiner to the Calcutta University. Throughout the book the learned author maintains a judicious frame of mind which has enabled him to tackle masterfully the preliminary elements of a comprehensive course of Hindi grammar. The present volume deals with Words, ending in the Gender of Nouns, which intricate subject has been done full justice to in these pages. The series will consist of two more parts which when complete will, we are sure, be of inestimable help to English-knowing students of Hindi, both in India and abroad. We heartily recommend this book to the public. The Errata should have been fuller, in view of the fact that the book is intended for students, and the fourth line of section 15, under the Homonyms, had better been omitted, for the same reason.

Jivan Aur Mrityu ka Prashna (Hindi).—By Dharmananda Tripathi. Published by Dharm Grantha-Mala-Karyalaya, Barabazar, Calcutta. Pp. 45. Price 5 as.

This is a translation of Swami Paramananda's

"The Problem of Life and Death," wherein the Swami has treated of the vital problems in a lucid and illuminating way. The translator has tried his best to keep up the spirit of the original. We are sure the pamphlet will be appreciated by the Hindi-reading public.

Studies in Universal Religion: Ramakrishna. Compiled from various authentic sources and done into English by Manmatha Nath Chatterji. Published by the Oriental Publishing House, Kaliprasanna Nyayaratna Lane, Baranagore, Calcutta. Crown 8vo. Pp. 506. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 6.

The book is an attempt to set forth the great Master's "teachings on Universal Religion" in a simple and impressive style, to help the general reader. Altogether 701 teachings have been brought together, but not classified. Perhaps the Index at the end of the volume is meant to supply this deficiency. The language has been put in the Biblical form, which, though elegant, will, we are afraid, scare away many who cannot bear the idea of another Incarnation being added to the list of the world's accepted ones. So this style defeats its own purpose. Sri Ramakrishna's own style was free from any such affectation. It was simple and clear, as his life was. The get-up of the book is nice and as such will be most acceptable to all Western lovers of Truth, but the price fixed—six rupees—is too much for the Indian customer who will naturally go in for a much cheaper edition. The author would have done well to provide an Indian edition at a third of its price. However, in the Master's pithy words, "the sugared loaf will taste equally sweet whether you take it lengthwise or breadthwise," and we sincerely hope the book will readily commend itself to those who want an *edition de luxe* of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, in India and abroad, alike for its substance as well as its classical expression.

The Buddhist Annual of Ceylon. Edited by S. W. Wijayatilake. Published by W. E. Bastion & Co., Colombo, Ceylon. Price Re. 1 50 or 2 S.

We accord a hearty welcome to the profusely illustrated second issue of the Buddhist Annual. It presents through the various learned articles, stories, news and notes etc. the nobly teachings of Lord

Buddha and speaks eloquently of the spread and progress of Buddhism in different parts of the world. The Re-establishment of Buddhism in India—an article from the pen of Anagarika Dharmapala is interesting. But it is unfortunate that the writer sees in the present-day Hinduism nothing but Brahminical priesthood, which together with Islamic fanaticism is alleged to be responsible in bringing about the destruction of Buddhism in India.

We are sorry to find that his zeal blinds him to read aright the religious history of India, past as well as present. It cannot but strike an impartial student of Buddhism in India that when the great religion of the Tathagata degenerated and lost the simplicity and charm which it originally possessed, the Hindu revivalists found it an easy task for them to overthrow the rival faith; but Hinduism assimilated much that was good and healthy in Buddhism and the spirit of Buddha, therefore, still persists in India. We are at a loss to understand what prevents Anagarika Dharmapala from seeing how modern Hinduism is daily gaining in its influence over the Hindus of all classes and is also trying to elevate the masses that have been subjected to great social oppression. We assure the zealous Buddhist missionary that he need not unnecessarily be anxious for the welfare of the Indian people and hope he would make a better use of his energy in trying first to set his own house in order. The writer transgresses the limits of propriety when he speaks about the greatest of Hindu revivalists, Sri Sankaracharya:—"Sankara, the Malabar Brahman, having found that in his own native land he was not recognised because of his illegitimate birth, left Malabar and having come to Upper India became a protagonist of Brahmanism and, it is said, began controversial wars with the Buddhists and defeated them." We did not know that bigotry could make a Buddhist missionary so lose his self-control as to write such fulsome stuff! It is with reference to preachers of this type that Swami Vivekananda wrote:—"Buddhist preachers come to Calcutta and abuse us with choice epithets, although we offer them enough respect." Is this the sample of the preaching that would re-establish Buddhism in India? Did vituperation ever advance the cause of any religion?

We are, however, glad to find the writer acknowledging that "The Ethics of the Noble Eightfold Path are being proclaimed unconsciously by the leaders of Indian politics." But did Lord Buddha really preach a new religion? We quote one whom the Buddhists look upon as an authority on Buddhism:—"The prevalent notion that Gautama was an enemy of Hinduism.....is nothing but a great misconception. This is not the case: Gautama was born and brought up and lived and died a Hindu.....He carried out to their logical conclusion principles of equity and justice already acknowledged by some of the most prominent Hindu thinkers.....Buddhism was the child, the product of Hinduism.".....(Buddhism by Mr. Rhys Davids.) Buddhism in its pristine purity is nothing but a restatement of the religion of the Upanishads, with special stress on certain of its aspects.

The Diary of a Pilgrim by Attele Ainnar says in one place:—"Gods are many and quaint in the Hindu Pantheon." Probably the writer does not know that not only most of these gods but also the gorgeous temples, and pompous processions etc. are the products of Buddhism.

We hope in future the Buddhist Annual will contain nothing that does not breathe the spirit of love and charity of the Master whose noble message it endeavours to disseminate.

The Soul of India.—By Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 20. Price 4 as.

In this brochure of four chapters the gifted poetess of India expresses beautifully the spiritual yearning in the Indian national movement. She is full of ecstasy while describing the past achievements of ancient and medieval India—"her spiritual evolution which through all the tumult and suffering of centuries of foreign invasion and domination has kept the inmost Soul of India inaccessible and unconquered"—her old village democracies, self-governing and self-contained, the living units of an immense imperial commonwealth—her civic life conserved and sustained by that wondrous and versatile caste-system representing in that stately era a true division of labour—and her warriors keeping alive "the traditions of her chivalry and valour as

keen and dazzling as their swords." Speaking of India's womanhood writes Mrs. Naidu:

".....The woman of ancient India had her lofty and legitimate place and function in the daily life of her race. Not only was it her sweet privilege to tend the hearth-fires and sacrificial fires in the happy and narrow seclusion of her home, but wide as humanity itself were the opportunities and occasions of her compassionate service, her intellectual triumphs and her saintly renunciations. Her agile and brilliant mind had access to the most intricate sciences and occult philosophies. Not seldom in her capacity as queen,—regnant or regent, was she called upon to prove the subtlety and sagacity, the breadth and daring of her state-craft. And age after age she vindicated the fidelity and fortitude, the courage and devotion of her love, on the funeral pyre which was so often the crucible of her purity, on the battle-field which was so frequently the altar of her heroism in defence of the Indian honour, of which she was at once the symbol and the shrine."

The poetess says very rightly that India's "imminent *To-morrow* can seek no lovelier inspiration than the chronicle of her immortal *Yesterday*, which

offers an ideal so comprehensive and complete in the far-famed efficiency of her civil and military organisations, her commercial enterprise, her economic prosperity, her matchless learning and her majestic art."

Truly it is said that India is alive not in her possessions but in her ideals.

Other books published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co.,
Madras :—

1. *India's Will to Freedom*.—By Lala Lajpat Rai. Pp. 188. Price Rs. 2-8.
2. *Lord Chelmsford's Viceroyalty*.—By Mr. Akshay K. Ghose. Pp. 83.
3. *The Ethics of Passive Resistance*.—By Mt. M. S. Maurice. Pp. 35. Price 4 as.
4. *The Truth about India*.—By Mr. H. M. Hyndman. Pp. 53. Price 12 as.
5. *The Failure of European Civilisation as a World-culture*.—By Mr. S. E. Stokes. Pp. 56. Price Re. 1.
6. *The Gospel of Freedom*.—By Mr. T. L. Vaswani. Pp. 78. Price 12 as.
7. *National Self-Realisation*.—By Mr. S. E. Stokes. Pp. 100. Price Re. 1-8.

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has sent the following appeal to the Press in connection with the Ramakrishna Mission Khulna Famine Relief Work :—

It has been already reported that the Mission has sent workers for relief work in the Satkhira Subdivision. At present the Mission has started one relief centre at Nakipur within the thana of Shamnagore. This thana is the most affected of all and terrible distress prevails here. It has 110 villages divided into 15 Unions under it. Excepting 3 or 4 villages all are very badly affected. The total failure of crops for the last two years has ruined the people. Consequently want of money and grains has brought many families to the brink of starvation. People do not get labour by the earnings of which they may maintain their families. Further, many villagers have not got a strip of cloth around their loins. The

women in many families cannot come out of their houses for want of even sufficient rags to cover their poor bodies. Distribution of cloth is very urgent. The Mission has already distributed rice among these people within a small area. It will soon take up the work of the whole thana. The weekly expenditure in that case is calculated to be about Rs. 800, per week. The Mission, therefore, appeals to the generous public for help. Contributions in the shape of money or cloth may be sent either to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, or the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

(Sd.) Saradananda.

Secy., R. K. Mission.

THE following is the report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, P. O. Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P. for the month of May, 1921.

Indoor patients :—There were 4 old and 14 new cases, of whom 10 were discharged cured, 1 died, 1 left treatment and 6 were under treatment. **Outdoor patients** :—Of the total number 2833 there were 1173 new and 1660 repeated cases.

Last month's balance	... Rs.	7618	3	6
Receipts during the month...	"	277	7	9
Total	... "	7895	11	3
Total Expenditure*	... "	1277	14	9

Balance ... " 6617 12 6

*Including Rs. 663-3-6 for Building expenses.

The total expenditure towards the building construction of the Sri Ramakrishna Charitable Dispensary, Bhubaneswar, Orissa, was Rs. 1865-3-1½ and towards maintenance Rs. 134-5-4½ for the period beginning from June, 1919 to January, 1921, a short report of which was published in the Prabuddha Bharata for July last.

The anniversary of the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta, was celebrated on Sunday, the 19th June in the premises of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat under the presidency of Swami Saradanandaji Maharaj, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, who is also the Vice-president of the Society. Professor Gokuldas Dey, M. A., Babus Lalit Mohan Chattopadhyaya and Bhupendra Kumar Basu spoke on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The president in the course of his lecture on Seva Dharmas as inaugurated by Sri Ramakrishna dwelt on the spirit of Service as he heard from the lips of his Master. With the worship of Mahavira and Ramanama Kirtan the function was brought to a close. Nearly 500 persons joined the celebration, including Sannyasins, respectable gentlemen of the city and the members of the Society.

The 86th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was observed at the Ramakrishna Math, Swami Vivekananda Sangham, High Road, Pudur, Vaniyambadi (Madras Presidency) on Sunday the 26th June. The programme included Puja, Bhajana, Harikatha and feeding of the poor. In the evening lectures were delivered on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

"Had India been Christian, India would have stood free long ago, for the Catholic sacramental system is a source of soul-force no human conception could ever rival"—such is the idea that a Catholic paper expressed some time ago. A Buddhist missionary on the other hand writes to the Buddhist Annual of Ceylon that Christianity is Semitic and is therefore foreign to the temperament of the Aryan people, besides it is associated

with the traffic of alcoholism and slaughter of harmless animals useful to the economic progress of the Indian people; and the acceptance of Buddhism alone, therefore, can save India and there is no other alternative.

We on our part think that the religion which believes in man's potential Divinity and perfection and in the One Soul that is the real nature of man, need not go to any other for soul-force and inspiration. If Christianity alone can ensure freedom, why is it that Christians are kept under subjection by Christians? And again, are the free and ruling Christian nations what they are, because of Christianity or in spite of it? Far be it from us to decry any religion on earth and be blind to what is noble and elevating in it. But we fail to understand how a person who has ever cared to study the religious history of the Hindus with an open and critical mind, could ever dream that they would all give up their own religion which they hold most dear to their hearts and for the preservation of which they have risked everything and deem no sacrifice too great for them.

The comparative study of religions and the slow but sure influence of one another's thoughts and cultures have already begun to broaden the mental horizon of the thoughtful among the followers of all religions and open their eyes to the essential principles that are at the background of all faiths. The result that has already been achieved fills our mind with hopes, when we find that the most bigoted religionists are coming to acknowledge, though partially, what is good in the religion of others, for which they had previously nothing but unstinted contempt. And this spirit of toleration, through God's grace, will be followed by the acceptance of all religions as true. We are sure, with the progress of time and better understanding all sincere people will be able to discover for themselves the harmony of all religions, that "God is one but His aspects are many. Diverse are the ways of approaching Him and every religion in the world shows one of these" (Sri Ramakrishna). The realisation of this unity will undoubtedly help the Christian, the Muhammedan, the Buddhist or the Hindu to be a better follower of his own religion. It is also sure to check the maddening zeal for proselytising and the evil spirit of commercialism in the name of religion that possess many deluded souls, who seem to be more solicitous for the spiritual enlightenment of others when they themselves and the people of their own faiths are groping in the dark and stand in greater need of the spiritual light! And it is indeed an irony that even those who do not at all think seriously about religion often support and patronise the organisations that carry on the propaganda for conversion because they are profitable to them in many ways!

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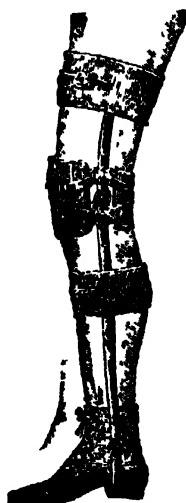
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Katha Upanishad, I, iii, 6.

Vol. XXVI, No. 302, SEPTEMBER 1921.

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Katha Upanishad, I. viii. 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

SEPTEMBER 1921

[No. 302

THE GREATNESS OF SOUTH INDIA.*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

THE South has kept Hinduism alive during the Mahomedan rule and even for some time previous to it. It was in the South that Sankaracharya was born, among that caste who wear a tuft on the front-head and eat food prepared with cocoanut oil; this was the country that produced Ramanuja; it was also the birth-place of Madhva Muni. Modern Hinduism owes its allegiance to these alone. The Vaishnavas of the Chaitanya sect form merely a recension of the Madhva sect; the religious reformers of the North such as Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, and Rainsanehi are all an echo of Sankaracharya; there you find the disciples of Ramanuja occupying Ayodhya and other places. These Brahmanas of the South do not recognise those of the North as

true Brahmanas, nor accept them as disciples, and even to the other day would not admit them to Sannyasa. These Madrasis even now occupy the principal seats of religion. It was in the South that—when people of Northern India were hiding themselves in woods and forests, giving up their treasures, their household deities, and wives and children, before the triumphant war-cry of Mahomedan invaders,—the suzerainty of the king of Vidyanagar was established firm as ever. In the South, again, was born the wonderful Sayanacharya—the strength of whose arms, vanquishing the Mahomedans, kept king Bukka on his throne, whose wise counsels gave stability to the Vidyanagar kingdom, whose state-policy established lasting peace and prosperity in the Deccan, whose superhuman genius and extra-ordinary industry produced the commentaries

* Written en route to the West to a brother-disciple.

on the whole Vedas; and the product of whose wonderful sacrifice, renunciation, and researches was the Vedanta treatise named Panchadasi—that Sannyasin Vidyaranya Muni or Sayana† was born in this land. The Madras Presidency is the habitat of that Tamil race, whose civilisation was the most ancient, and a branch of whom called the Sumarians, spread a vast civilisation on the banks of the Euphrates in very ancient times; whose astrology, religious lore, morals and rites etc. furnished the foundation for the Assyrian and Babylonian civilisations; and whose mythology was the source of the Christian Bible. Another branch of these Tamilians spread from the Malabar coast and gave rise to the

wonderful Egyptian civilisation, and the Aryans also are indebted to this race in many respects. Their colossal temples in the South proclaim the triumph of the Saiva and Vaishnava sects. The great Vaishnava religion of India has also sprung from a Tamil Pariah—Satkope—“who was a dealer in winnowing-fans but was a Yogin all the while.” And the Tamil Alwars or devotees still command the respect of the whole Vaishnava sect. Even now the study of the Dvaita, Visishtadvaita and Advaita systems of Vedanta is cultivated more in Southern India than anywhere else. Even now the thirst for religion is stronger here than in any other place.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

A N era of synthesis, an age of harmony and reconciliation has dawned upon the world and mankind is being prepared for a common ideal—the ideal of a universal religion that will ultimately lead to the union of all nations on a spiritual basis. The charm of the sectarian or political unity that so long promised to serve as the cementing principle of life is doubtless losing its hold on the minds of nations. The mortal struggles and devastating wars for the satisfaction of the lust of material wealth and power seemed to be the eye-opener of the nations of the world but the lesson has been practically lost on them and the day of the realisation of the universal bond is being pushed further and further. Greater calamities are

probably in store in the womb of futurity, for, in spite of the bitterest experiences of the past, none of the powerful nations seem to be sincerely willing to bring about a thorough change in their ruinous national policy and make the necessary sacrifice for the sake of the principle which they profess to follow. And the very thought of the heavy price that they may have yet to pay for still pursuing the old suicidal policy is sure to send a thrill through the heart of all thoughtful persons who cherish the real well-being of the world in the inmost core of their being. But however retarded may be the day of peace and harmony it cannot fail to come sooner or later, for the signs of the times are propitious.

† According to some, Sayana, the commentator of the Vedas, was a brother of Vyatanya Muni.

Community of interest is the bond that unites individuals and nations together.

Common love for one's own people and country on the positive side and hatred against the common enemy on the negative side have been the greatest factors for the unification of diverse peoples of the West into nations and in this way did the political nationalism of the West come into existence. The life-history of the great Occidental nations—the ancient Greeks and Romans and the modern French and English, for example, prove the biological law that self-love, be it egoistic or communalistic, is the guiding principle of individuals as well as communities. But this selfish motive, however beneficial at the outset, in uniting a people in hostilities against the common enemy, contains also the germ of disunion and disruption of the various members when the external unifying factor ceases to exist and purely personal considerations come into play. This is, therefore, the cause that foments internal unrest and disaffection and leads to severe struggles between the privileged and the non-privileged, the capitalist and the labourer, and the ruler and the ruled. Unless this self-love is replaced by the spirit of universal love which alone may check the insatiable desire for exploitation and greed for domination, no permanent peace can ever possibly be brought into being.

The dangerous political basis on which the whole structure of the Western society has been constructed, though it is undoubtedly helpful at one time, can never ensure the stability of the society that is indispensable for the growth of the higher sentiments of humanity and for the transformation of the animal-man into a really human being. Thus the maintenance of political power and economic supremacy, or the preservation of national efficiency and

social prosperity for their own sake, cannot be regarded as the *summum bonum* as these cannot satisfy the legitimate and noble aspirations of the human mind; but these gain their true meaning and purpose when they are made to subserve a higher ideal of life.

All the nations of the earth have to pass, more or less, through a number of stages of progress but none is, on that account, exactly like another. Each possesses an ideal of its national life that realises itself through all the changes of fortune and social as well as economic evolutions and revolutions. Social perfection may be the goal of some, others may live for gaining political imperialism, while there may be some others who aim at the attainment of economic supremacy, but to religious India has ever pledged herself to be faithful unto death. It is her unique tenacity to preserve her spiritual ideal that has saved her life in the midst of all foreign conquests and social and economical cataclysms. Sceptres and crowns that rose and fell, and political power that passed from hand to hand, could never touch the real soul of India; and the greatest trials and national disasters could but strengthen her love for the one mission of her life—the conservation and dissemination of spirituality, that never failed to influence and culturally conquer even her conquerors. It is because of this speciality of the holy soil of India that her children, whichever religion they may belong to, are as a rule generally actuated by spiritual ideals that serve as the regulative factors and controlling agencies of the activities of their life, both individual and collective. Religion has thus been the life of the Indian people and this is the reason why the Hindu

colonising enterprises and the Buddhist religious missions were never followed by the political or economic conquest of the peoples that accepted India's religion and civilisation, for India always rested satisfied with the cultural conquest only.

Community of material ideals may help to weld the followers of the various religions in India and abroad, but such a union can never be expected to be lasting as the inspiration is doomed to die out after a time. It is religion alone that may serve as the permanent basis of national and international unity. From a superficial outlook the ideal may no doubt appear to be Utopian. But the great lesson of the utter failure of the Occidental civilisation, founded as it is on the political basis, to secure peace and harmony should no longer fail to disillusionise those who still dream of uniting the various peoples of the world by means of a political bond. The pious wish of any particular sect or religion to dominate the world by the relentless enforcement of its doctrines on others, if need be even by the power of the sword, has no longer any chance of realisation, and political nationality which is helping greatly to break down the barriers of caste, creed and religion, though essential, is a passing phase that is preparing all nations for a purer form of nationalism based on a spiritual basis. And therefore, as sectarian bigotry and religious fanaticism are fast disappearing and men have commenced to hold no longer the non-essentials of their religions as of primary importance and are being more and more alive to their cardinal doctrines and underlying principles which differ but little, no age seems to be more favourable for the acceptance of a universal religious ideal that would be the rationale

and common spiritual substratum of all religions that are professed in different parts of the world.

In ancient India the Hindu socio-religious structure attained a marvellous success in carrying out the greatest experiment in human organisation that was ever attempted by man, in which religion became the binding principle of peoples differing widely in race, tradition and culture; and it was neither brute force nor political diplomacy but the power of the spirit and the force of all-embracing love that emanated from the realisation of the Unity residing in diversity, that accomplished this apparently impossible task. By a divine dispensation India again has been the meeting place of all the religions of the earth and the problem that first presented itself at the dawn of the Indo-Aryan civilisation and was solved so successfully, has again made its appearance, though on a grander scale, at the beginning of a renaissance that is destined to elevate India to a position which she could never attain in the past and which the ancients were never able even to dream of. India is to realise the synthetic harmony of all religions herself and preach to the whole world the message of universal love and reconciliation based on the highest spiritual culture that is destined to bring the spirit of peace and good-will among the nations engaged in debasing and mortal struggles, economic as well as political.

Let each man be a Christian in the matter of mercy, a Moslem in the matter of strict observance of external forms, and a Hindu in the matter of universal charity towards all living creatures.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S UNIVERSALITY OF RELIGIOUS IDEALS.*

IT is our privilege to-night to offer our heart's adoration to this greatest divine manifestation of the age. Sri Ramakrishna was the fulfilment or consummation of all the greatest messengers of light who came in the past. In order to establish harmony amongst all the great faiths and religions of the world, in order to bring that one common truth, he had to represent in his life the essential and fundamental truths of life and creation, and he stood as the synthesis of all the greatest representatives of all the great religions. And no wonder that in him the Christians, Mohammedans, and different denominations of Hindu religion found and saw their respective ideals.

Many may think, 'Why should we worship him?' 'Why should we worship at all?'—many ask. Two classes or types of beings do not worship. There is the savage, the primitive man, the idiot, who does not worship, because in him the spirit of worship has not yet been developed—it is yet latent, dormant; and there is the God-man, the perfect soul, who does not worship because he has risen above the necessity of worship. Yet the God-men, the messengers of light, like the great ones of all ages and all countries, showed the spirit of worship and meditation that others should follow in their footsteps. But all the persons placed in the intermediate stages of evolution must worship, cannot help worshipping. Because the word "worship" is derived from the word "worth," meaning value, hence

it means making oneself worthy of the highest ideal. And what is the highest ideal in life? To realise the Divine in us, to attain to God-consciousness, to feel the close relationship to the Divine, to become free, perfect. You try to express it any way you like, but there is the common point that you have to be worthy of the ideal. You have to raise yourself to the ideal. And as long as we are not perfect, as long as we are not great, as long as we are not what we should be, we have to place before our mind's eye the great ideals.

You may say, 'Why should we worship an Incarnation or a perfected soul? Why should we not worship the divine, the infinite, all-pervading Spirit?' It is so easy to say. But what is worship? The towers and altars, the temples and fruits, are material offerings. They have their value only to help us to bring out that right spirit of worship and adoration, constant remembrance of the ideal. And by such constant remembrance of the ideal, we become one with the ideal. But what is meant by remembrance? Remembering means bringing within the range of our mental vision, within the range of our heart and soul. But the Infinite cannot be worshipped in a real sense. In trying to worship the Infinite we have to transcend the limitations of the senses, mind and intellect, and we have to become one with the Infinite. Freed and emancipated from all the limitations, we become one with the Infinite. But in order to reach that state, we have to go through lower steps. As when we want to reach the roof, we have to go through so many staircases. That is why the

* A lecture delivered on the 86th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna in Native Sons' Hall, San Francisco, California.

personal ideal is a necessity at a certain stage of evolution, and instead of making any imaginary form, when we accept the greatest personality which manifested and revealed itself to us, through such acceptance as a chosen ideal, cherishing such a divine personality, we are constantly reminded of the ideal. That is why we cannot but accept one of these great personal ideals.

But, as I said, Sri Ramakrishna, being the consummation of all, being the fulfilment of all, is suited to the modern age, because he lived and thought according to the necessities of the age. Though Vedanta does not restrict anyone, does not force anyone to follow one kind of faith, or take up one ideal or to recognise one personal ideal as the only truth, yet on this most holy occasion, we are filled with the blessed memory of this noble ideal. It is not a man-worship, as many think; it is to recognise or see God in man that we worship Sri Ramakrishna. It is a fact that God exists in and through all; yet in some it is manifested more, in others less. But in such God-men, in such incarnations, in such great messengers of light, God manifests fully. In Sri Ramakrishna all human personality, all human limitations were gone. Only the Divine remained.

And what is the meaning, the divine meaning of the advent of such a life? What is the purpose of such a life? As the Gita says—"When religion disappears and irreligion prevails"—the pure spirit of religious life is forgotten—when such calamity comes in human life that we forget the divine nature of our soul, we begin to think that God is a myth and superstition—a few leaders of certain institutions lay their heads together and want to hoodwink the public, to keep them

under subjugation, and give them something like God—when we begin to think that God and spiritual life have no basis at all,—in order to show by their life and by their teachings that God is the only reality in the midst of the fleeting and vanishing shadows of life, the Divine Spirit incarnates in the form of these Messengers of light; to show that the Divine Spirit exists in you, in me, in all and that spiritual life is not a mere matter of words, is not mere intellectual gymnastics, is not a matter of mere reasoning and argument, but is a matter of realisation and a most practical thing, a most natural and vital thing—because that is our very life. The life we are living now is an artificial life, life on the surface, life in the senses, life in the body, or life in thoughts and desires. But life in the Spirit is our true nature. We are the Spirit. We are children of God. We are part and parcel of the Divine Spirit. We are one with the Divine, and in order to show that, the ideal life, the practical life, they come. And thus Sri Ramakrishna came. He used to say: "I am a mould." We have to cast our life into this mould. He does not want our worship, or expect anything. One who could not even use the words "me" and "mine" but would say, "come to this place;" who could not even repeat words like "master" or "teacher"; one whom others could not salute beforehand; one from whom all selfishness had gone, all the human limitations had gone; one who lived as the Divine Spirit, Divine Mother;—he does not want our worship. It is for our good, for our benefit. It is in order to raise ourselves to that divine plane by remembrance of the ideal, that we worship him. We place an altar, or we offer things here. Why? In order to discover

that innermost sanctuary, our heart and soul, where there is true worship. We are reminded by the altar, of that innermost sanctuary where we can place the divine ideal, so that, with the devotee, we may sing, "Come, oh Mother, make our heart and soul Thy permanent sanctuary." Offerings remind us of the offering of our heart and soul, the sacrifice of our life, dedication, consecration of our life on the altar of the Master who came for this age, to spread the most life-giving and inspiring and harmonising, the broadest and most universal teachings to the world, so that by our actions, by our thoughts, we shall glorify the Divine, our object of wor-

ship. And not one life—sacrifice of one life, dedication of one life, is enough. Life after life should be dedicated. As the great prophet of Nadia sang: "I do not seek material possessions; I do not seek any sense-enjoyments, neither name nor fame; may I have that unsullied devotion from life to life!" May our prayer be that we shall be sincere and earnest in our adoration to the Lord, and may we try our best to fulfil the greatest message in our life which Sri Ramakrishna came to teach—to become Divine, and pray that the light which came to the world would illumine the heart and soul of all of us!

SWAMI PRakashananda.

KEDAR NATH AND BADRI NARAYAN.

(*An Unpublished Writing by the Sister Nivedita.*)

IF any man doubts that Hinduism is the romance of India let him make pilgrimage to the Himalayas and judge for himself. The famous shrines of Kedar Nath and Badri Narayan are like the cathedral-cities of two remote northern dioceses upon which has broken for the last two thousand years the tidal wave of every great spiritual movement in Indian history, usually a little late, for the Himalayas have not been central. They have been receptive, not creative. The forces that have overswept them have all originated elsewhere. But sooner or later they have arrived. Sooner or later they have made their impress. Till to-day, anyone who has thoroughly studied the country between Hardwar, Kedar Nath, Badri Narayan and Kathgodam cannot fail to know the story of his nation's past, at least in so far as that of her thought can make it clear.

For while religion and philosophy are not

the whole of the national life of India they are undoubtedly the key to that life. Hinduism gives a continuous precipitate, as it were, from Indian history. It is a stratified deposit, and each period of advancing thought has made its own contribution to the series. The two last and most important are represented by the Saivism of Kedar Nath and the Vaishnavism of Badri Narayan. But these are not the most ancient forms of those ideas. The Saivism of Kedar Nath quite rightly describes itself as Sankaracharya and the Vaishnavism of Badri claims with perfect truth the name of Ramanuja. Neither is primitive. Neither has been accidental. Each in its turn has been a great emotional revival, calling men to return to the memory of an older and purer faith than they saw about them. Sankaracharya, or his movement, took the Himalayas by storm. Traces of the older systems that had preceded him, remain, it is true, to this day, but we cannot doubt that

at a given period the whole region was dominated by his influence, and by the school that he founded. Badri itself was Saivite then. Even now there remain within the circle of its authority many relics and traces of the age when Mahadev was as much the centre of worship here as in the sister-diocese.

Each of the two great shrines is built in a glacial valley, and smaller preparatory sanctuaries occur along the roads that lead up to them. A line of Sivas, a line of Narayans, leads to Kedar and to Badri. Again, each can only be served by monks in residence for six months in every year. Hence there is in each case a winter-monastery at a distance of some score of miles or so, which acts as a sort of abbey guest-house to the chief shrine. In the case of Kedar Nath this is Akhi Math and in that of Badri Narayan it is Joshi Math. In the last named there is abundance of evidence that it was originally Saivite and that the tides of Vaishnavism flowed over this pre-existing condition. Some think that the very name is a corruption of Joytir Math, the probable older form.

The temple of Badri itself is exceedingly modern. That will be a glad day in India when a developed respect for history shall guide the councils of all who have to do with the building and repair of temples! At present they see no reason why the mortar of the master-builder should not be smeared all over the beautiful weathered surfaces of the grey stones of the temples. They call it necessary repairs. As if a skin that was renewed every few years could ever look beautiful to those who loved us! I know nothing that so puts one out of time for worship as a look of aggressive newness on the face of a church or temple that one knows to be old and fraught with many memories! Even at Joshi Math, the main sanctuary has successfully rid itself of most of the traces of its past. In this case, however, there is a *malū* of smaller shrines built in the edge of the magnificent plinth-like terrace which have never

been interfered with, though some of them have fallen into decay, and these witness to the history of the spot in unmistakable terms. At Badri Narayan itself, the gateway and ramparts of the temple are not so modern. They are built in a Mogul style of somewhat late type. Within, the only minor shrine is that of Ghanta-karna, the Bell-eared, who acts as Kotwal of the sanctuary. In temples of the older Vaishnavism, this place would have been held by Garud, as we see throughout the whole Himalayan region.

Badri Narayan then stands before us as the evident crowning example of that mediæval uprising of Vaishnavism which began with Ramanuja, and found one of its greatest voices in Tulsidas's Ramayana. This Vaishnavism was all-powerful apparently in the Deccan, and in the South. But in Bengal the wonderful personality of Chaitanya gave it a turn of expression which was peculiar to that province and thus prevented the Vaishnavism of his countrymen from taking the more theological, less mythological, form of Lakshmi-Narayan. Hari-Hara, moreover, is obviously the creation of the same age. How unthinkable to us now that there was a time when pious and devout men would not consent even to hear the name of Vishnu! Yet such was undoubtedly the case, and more by token, here is the very head and front of such offending kept up to stand outside His shrine, and in an excess of passionate chivalry to guard it from all harm!

An interesting question is whether Narayan was always coupled with Lakshmi. The little shrine of Vishnu-Prayag at the junction of the Dhauli and Vishnu Ganga, just below Joshi Math, inclines me to think not. Here we have an altar of Narayan alone and on the opposite side of the narrow pathway, obviously a later addition, a tiny chamber of Lakshmi. This looks as if the pairing of the two had been a subsequent concession to popular ideas, which must have been long

tinged with the tendency to assume such a duality in the Divine Nature.

The Vaishnava conquest is represented, even at Kedar Nath itself by the neighbouring shrine of Triyugi Narayan—the Narayan of three aeons—on a companion mountain. The fire which burns there is said to have been lighted long ago in Satya-yuga—a claim which may possibly be an indication of veritable antiquity.

This is not impossible, because there really was an older Vaishnavism, and we do here and there come upon the attempts of the mediæval revival to identify itself with it. The Siva of Sankaracharya even at Kedar Nath supersedes a worship of Satya Narayan. The same has also happened at the almost deserted temples, of Bhetha Chatty, near Gupta Kashi. Now, whoever Satya Narayan really was, he is claimed by the Vaishnavas as one of the forms of Narayan, and it is clear that he would be equally so held in the early Ramanuja period. From the time that Hinduism begins to emerge into definition and distinctness, against the contrasting background of Buddhism, the whole history of Indian thought becomes a sort of plaiting together of these two threads, in which first one and then the other may be expected to reappear continually. At Kedar Nath there is indeed the question whether the worship of Devi did not intervene as the officially recognised form between Satya Narayan and the Sankaracharyan Siva. Certainly in the village street there, is a small chapel containing the nine forms of the Mother in sculpture. At Bhetha Chatty, however, there is no trace of Devi-worship. There Siva follows hard on Satya Narayan and there is no long distance of time even between the building of their respective temples. A certain Gandharan pattern is indeed integral to both and this, if my own theory is correct, might possibly help us to date the earlier as subsequent to 540 A. D.

The worship of Devi has a long and im-

portant history of its own, which with the help of these Himalayan regions is not difficult to make out. Did it come down upon India, already elaborated and highly formalised, from Thibet or China? There is much to favour this view. Amongst other things, the two most perfect shrines of ancient Mother-worship left in India are both on, or close to, roads between Thibet and the plains. One is Devi Dhura, between Kathgodam and Thibet, and the other is Gopeswar near Chamoli or Lall Sangha, on the Badri Narayan route. There is no denying the immense influence that China has had, in developing some of the Indian images, but chiefly, I suspect, those of the Mother. It would also seem as if the moment of the introduction of Devi in this form had been the same time at which the worship of Siva took on a phallic complexion, for Pundits and Pujaris, though never for the people as a whole.

The highly elaborate worship of Devi was always associated with Siva, apparently, as the guardian of Her shrines. And the characteristic form of Siva at the period in question is that of Varaha-Mihita, namely, a cube surmounted by an octagon, surmounted by the rounded top of the Siva proper. These Sivas we find constantly, at all the older religious sites, throughout the mountains. And they always mark a development of the site prior to Sankaracharya. But nowhere do they occur in such abundance as at Gopeswar and Devi Dhura. Gopeswar indeed carries proofs of having been a recognised religious establishment even before this, for I found there no less than two still surviving, of the four-headed Sivas that are commonly known as Brahma-s. This is eloquent and incontestable evidence that in all probability the shrine was originally a Buddhist monastery. Further evidence in the same direction is afforded by the Chaitya-form of the little shrine of Amusuya Devi standing to the side of the main temple.

(To be concluded).

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CLXXXVI.

(Translated.)

Glory to Ramakrishna !

Ghazipur.

15th March, 1890.

Revered Sir,

Received your kind note yesterday. I am very sorry to learn that Suresh Babu's illness is extremely serious. What is destined to come will transpire. It is a matter of great regret that you too have fallen ill. So long as egoism lasts, any shortcoming in adopting remedial measures is to be considered as Idleness—it is a fault and a guilt. For one who has not that egoistic idea, the best course is to forbear. The dwelling-place of the ~~H~~atman, this body, is a veritable means of work, and he who converts this into an infernal den is guilty, and he who neglects it is also to blame. Please act according to circumstances as they present themselves, without the least hesitation.

नाभिनन्देत मरणं भाभिनन्देत जीवितम् ।

कालमेव प्रतीक्षेत नियमं धूतको व्यथा ॥

—“The highest duty consists in doing the little that lies in one's power, seeking neither death nor life, and biding one's time like a servant ready to do any behest.”

There is a dreadful outbreak of influenza at Benares and P—— Babu has gone to Allahabad. B—— has suddenly come here. He has got fever; he was wrong to start under such circumstances. * * * I am leaving this place to-morrow. * * * My countless salutations to Mother. You all bless me that I may have sameness of vision, that avoiding the bondages which one is heir to by one's very birth, I may not again get stuck in self-imposed bondages. If there be any Doer of good and if He have the power

and the opportunity, may He vouchsafe the highest blessings unto you all—this is my constant prayer.

Yours affectionately,
Vivekananda.

CLXXXVII.

(Translated.)

Ghazipur.

15th March, 1890.

Dear —

I am extremely sorry to hear that you are passing through mental afflictions. Please do only what is agreeable to you.

आवज्ञानं तावस्मरणं
तावज्ञाननीजडेर शयनम् ।
इति संसारे ट्युटसरदोषः
कथमिह मानव तत्र सन्तोषः ॥

—“While there is birth there is death, and again entering the mother's womb. This is the manifest evil of transmigration. How, O man, dost thou want satisfaction in such a world !”

Yours affectionately,
Vivekananda.

P. S. I am leaving this place to-morrow. Let me see which way destiny leads !

CLXXXVIII.

Extracts.

1895.

Dear A —

We have no organisation, nor want to build any. Each one is quite independent to teach, quite free to preach whatever he or she likes.

If you have the spirit within, you will never fail to attract others. The —'s method can never be ours, for the very simple reason that they are an organised sect, we are not.

Individuality is my motto. I have no ambition beyond training individuals up. I know very little : that little I teach without reserve ; where I am ignorant I confess it as such, and never am I so glad as when I find people being helped by Theosophists, Christians, Muhammedans or any body in the world. I am a Sannyasin, as such I consider myself as a servant, not as a master in the world.....If people love me they are welcome, if they hate they are also welcome.

Each one will have to save himself, each one to do his own work. I seek no help, I reject none. Nor have I any right in the world to be helped. Whosoever has helped me or will help, it will be their mercy to me, not my right, and as such I am eternally grateful.

When I became a Sannyasin I consciously took the step, knowing that this body will have to die of starvation. What of that, I am a beggar. My friends are poor. I love the poor, I welcome poverty. I am glad that I sometimes have to starve. I ask help of none. What is the use? Truth will preach itself, it will not die for the want of the helping hands of me! " Making happiness and misery the same, making success and failure the same, fight thou on" (Gita). It is that eternal love, unruffled equanimity under all circumstances, and perfect freedom from jealousy or animosity that will tell. That will tell, nothing else. * * *

Yours,

Vivekananda.

THE GITA AND NON-RESISTANCE.

THE popular idea as regards the principal features of the instructions of the Bhagavad-Gita is that Arjuna showed a strong reluctance to fight his kinsmen and friends, thinking such an act as a heinous violence that would lay bare for him the yawning gates of hell. He would indeed, if he could come out victorious, enjoy the bounties of the earth, but bounties steeped in the very blood that ran through his veins. He threw aside the mighty bow, the Gándiva, and sat mute in utter grief and bewilderment. It was at that time that Sri Krishna, his divine advisor and charioteer, incited him to take up arms, making him fully convinced that the wrong he was suspecting in fighting his own relatives was an outcome of sheer weakness which he ought to throw off at once. In fact his acts of prowess would pave for him the way to happiness both here and hereafter. In case he would fall vanquished he would be led to heaven, and if he would conquer he had the vast empire under his feet. So opportune an occasion indeed fell to the lot of the blessed among Kshatriyas.

Thus according to the popular view the entire body of instructions contained in the Bhagavad-

Gita goes to show that war, the extreme form of violence, is not an unrighteous act as Arjuna supposed it to be, but वर्षद्वारमपवृत्तम्—"an open gate to heaven"—of course if it is fought justly. Such being the case it is popularly believed that the teaching of the Bhagavad-Gita is a call to arms, justification for violence, as opposed to any instruction on non-violence or non-resistance, which is perhaps the basic principle of the Vedantic religion.

We propose to show in the course of our short discourse here that the popular view stated above misses the dominant underlying note of "the Song Celestial" and fails to discern that if it is possible to put the entire teachings of the Gita in one word, it is non-violence or non-resistance.

First of all, it is necessary to state clearly what is meant by the term 'non-resistance.' A man is said to be non-resisting when he lets things come and go as they please, maintaining however all the time the perfect serenity of the mind. In other words, one is said to have attained the state of complete non-resistance when one has gone beyond pleasure and pain, i. e., when one is able to maintain perfect equilibrium of the mind under both

pleasurable and painful circumstances. Pleasure and pain are but different reactions caused upon the mind by various external circumstances and when these reactions are stopped, it is non-resistance.

It may be objected however that inasmuch as one cannot live upon this earth without struggling with external nature, complete denial of resistance is 'prima facie' absurd. But it is interesting to note what the Vedanta says on this point—wherever there is the consciousness of two, there is struggle, or resistance, but when one learns to observe the One in the many, all struggle and resistance vanish. For whom would one resist when the knower, knowledge and object known become merged into that one eternal ocean of infinity? The Gita also has in view this state of 'Jivan-mukti' or 'Sthita-prajna' as the highest ideal of manhood wherein there may be intense activity but no struggle, the fiercest of fight without resistance.

The Gita opens with the scene of the deadliest battle known in the Indian history and ends, as we may understand, not with a friendly truce but with the rattling of arms. Hence an almost unsurmountable difficulty makes its stand against the understanding—as to how of all things under heaven the doctrine of non-resistance might be said to have been preached to Arjuna, no less a person than the Hero of Kurukshetra, and particularly on an occasion like that. Had the gospel been preached in the peaceful precincts of a forest hermitage there would have been no difficulty to accept it. But it is a remarkable fact which no student of the Gita ought to miss that the peculiar circumstances under which the Gita was instructed, the critical nature of the situation of the pupil with his doubts and misgivings, and his subsequent actions,—all these, instead of lessening, add to the excellence and glory of this most wonderful universal doctrine ever preached on the holy soil of India. All these go to show more emphatically that the lesson of non-resistance as expounded in the Gita is such as can be practised not only by the sages in their hermitages but by warriors also amidst the deafening din and thundering clamours of destructive battles. So long it was believed that the Vedantic principle of non-resistance could only be practised by the peaceful recluse who lived far beyond the din and bustle of the active

life of the world. But the Gita, with its most significant occasion and dreadful scene of action, for the first time in the history of mankind set forth in the most clear and unambiguous terms that perfect rest or complete non-resistance could be maintained amidst the direst of activities.

Arjuna faced the Kauravas in the open field of Kurukshetra with a view to free his father's kingdom from the usurping hands of his cousins. He knew it fully well that his cause was a just one. Neither can it be said that he did not know that he would have to fight with his friends and superiors. We meet him at Kurukshetra asking his charioteer to place the car between the fighting lines so that he might have a clear survey of the whole field and choose his own combatants. But suddenly and quite unexpectedly a sense of deep grief and strong remorse overwhelmed him and he felt that he was going to commit a great sin as he was about to kill his relations for the enjoyment of the kingdom of earth. He preferred the beggar's bowl to the sceptre which he would have to hold with a hand stained with the blood of his kith and kin. Nor can it be maintained that Arjuna was of such a quiet nature as would prefer the life of a Sannyasin to the luxuries of a royal life. In fact, he had no disliking for the life of enjoyment in the palace were it not for the fact that he felt a sense of horror to shed the blood so dear to him, to win the throne. His royal nature justly demanded the throne but his false notion of Dharma strongly resisted his just and natural cravings, and a deadly struggle, more dreadful in its nature than the outward battle of Kurukshetra, arose in his mind which quite upset his judgment and caused him no little trouble.

Then it was the omniscient charioteer's turn to show his friend and disciple the real way to blessedness. Arjuna, as we have already seen, was not unwilling to regain his father's kingdom. What made him reluctant to fight was the fear of the consequences that such an action would lead to. As a matter of course Sri Krishna made him learn that *secret of work* by which, if rightly adopted, no action, good or bad, could produce any effect upon the doer. Good and bad effects are like gold and iron chains equally strong to bind the soul. One must go beyond them both in order to attain real blessedness. But the way is not by

shirking action, which no one can possibly do if he is to live, but by learning the secret which being applied to work, Karma loses its binding character and is transformed into a real means to attain perfect happiness.

It is the instruction of this *secret of work* with which the splendid fabric of the Bhagavad-Gita is entirely woven. This Secret Sri Krishna calls by the name of Yoga—योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्—which he defines as the act of retaining सम्पत्ति or perfect equilibrium of the mind under all circumstances. To a real Yogi there is nothing pleasurable or painful, he neither courts nor avoids anything. For him the dual throngs of love and hatred, good and bad, liking and aversion, gain and loss have ceased for ever. In other words a Yogan is he whose mind has found eternal rest in the state of perfect non-resistance.

नैव सद्व कृतेनार्थे नाऽकृतेनह कश्चन ।
न आस्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यवाधयः ॥

"He has no object in this world (to gain) by doing (an action), nor (does he incur any loss) by non-performance of action,—nor has he (need of) depending on any thing for any object." (The Gita, III. 18).

Resistance, as we have already seen, is always caused by attachment or hatred lurking behind the mind, and when these feelings are levelled down there remains nothing to be resisted. It is evident that this principle of true non-resistance is the lesson which Arjuna received from the divine lips of his friend and advisor; for what the Lord urged him to do was to conquer attachment and hatred.

मुखदःखे समै कृष्णा लाभानां गौ जयान्त्वै ।

तनो वांगात् युद्धस्त्रै व पापमारणार्थि ॥

"Having made pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and defeat, the same, engage thou then in battle. So shalt thou incur no sin." (The Gita, II. 38).

Sri Krishna instructed Arjuna to make his mind free from these dual throngs which being given up he would be able to see things in an altogether different light. Thus it would be improper to say that Sri Krishna's object was merely to incite Arjuna to take up arms against his foes. What he meant actually to impress upon his disciple was that, war, though in itself an act sure to produce dreadful reactions, might be used as a means to Moksha if fought in the method prescribed by him. And the method he prescribed was a method of non-resistance.

The illuminating instructions of the greatest of teachers dispelled the mist of doubt off the mind of Arjuna and he expressed his readiness to act in the manner prescribed by the Lord. He rushed to battle, fought and won. Could we have had an entrance into the mind of Arjuna, we would certainly have found out that the battle he fought was in sooth a battle of non-resistance. The feeling of loss or gain, attachment or hatred could no longer raise that fierce overwhelming tempest in his mind with which he was being tossed at the beginning. A perfect calm reigned in his mind which the horrors of the war could no longer disturb. He was enjoying the most perfect rest amid the fiercest of activities.

SWAMI JNANESWARANANDA.

STORIES OF SAINTS.

(Retold by G.)

VIII.

ST. ROSE OF MARY.

TOWARDS the end of the 16th century there lived in Lima, the Capital of Peru, a girl so beautiful and so pure that her friends called her Rose, though she was christened Isabel.

From her childhood Rose loved God and tried

to please Him in many ways. And when she discovered that on account of her personal beauty she was called Rose she felt much mortified; for she knew that praise of physical beauty often was a hindrance to that serene beauty of mind that springs from purity and holiness. So the thought

that people observed her external beauty became most repugnant to her and in distress she poured out her heart to the Blessed Mother of the Lord Jesus. For to Her, Rose was wont to go with all her doubts and perplexities.

In childlike simplicity Rose approached the image of our Lady and knelt down in fervent prayer to know the Divine will. And as she earnestly looked up into the beloved face of the image she saw it lit up and instinct with life, smiling down at her with loving kindness. And as she gazed with delight into the Blessed face she saw the lips move and she heard a voice : " My child, your name is very pleasing to the Son I bear in my arms; but henceforth add my name to it and be called Rose of Mary. You will be a fragrant flower, consecrated to the Lord Jesus." And so Isabel De Flores is known in the history of the saints as St. Rose of Mary.

Parents and friends loved Rose, but they did not understand her very well. So one day when the mother takes her to some friends, she places on her head a garland of flowers that men might admire the spotless beauty of her daughter. But Rose offers herself and her beauty to God and with a smile on her lips she thrusts a pin through the flowers. And when night comes and the mother tries to remove the garland, she finds it firmly pinned to the forehead. And smiling again, Rose says : " Mother, I do not wish to be admired by men, I wish to please my Lord Jesus."

Rose tried to lessen her attractiveness with ugly dressing and long fasts. But still she was sought after by several of her mother's friends as a wife for their sons. Rose however would have no bridegroom but Christ and it was useless for anyone to try to shake her resolution. And in order that her beauty might no longer be an attraction to men she disfigured her face with a burning powder. And when one still praised the beauty of her hands she immediately thrust both her hands into hot lime, saying : " Never shall my hands be to anyone an occasion of temptation."

Rose had a little hut built for herself in her parents' garden. There she lived in constant communion with God. Many hours of the day she was occupied with sewing and embroidery to help to defray her parents' expense for her parents were poor. She allowed herself only two hours

for sleep, ate very little and her bed was made of sharp stones and a piece of wood for a pillow. And when friends remarked on the smallness of the cell, she would say : " It is large enough for the Beloved of my soul and me."

It is said that the Mother of Jesus came and visited Rose in her little hermitage and conversed with her, instructing her in many wonderful ways. And Christ came into her garden and called her in a soft sweet voice and consoled her when once she was in great mental distress. But most often came the Infant Jesus. He came to her on all occasions. He would walk by her side hand-in-hand with her, or He would seat Himself on a cushion at her side while she was sewing. And when He told her that He loved her as much as she loved Him, her heart was so filled with heavenly joy that she became lost in contemplation.

When Rose read and kissed the Lord's Holy Name in her book, which she often did from love and reverence, the Child Jesus would sometimes appear and place His little hands on the book and then He would caress her in a loving childlike manner.

A beautiful story is told of how the Infant Christ came to her during an illness when her throat was terribly sore. Playfully He challenges her to a game of skill, seemingly unconscious of her pain. They play and laugh and Rose wins. And as a prize she asks for the removal of her pain. This is granted, but in a second game on which the Child insists, Rose loses and immediately the pain returns and the Child disappears from her sight.

Rose then understood the meaning of the mystic game that it was better to suffer patiently and lovingly than to ask God to deliver her from pain. And ever after she prayed that the Lord might increase her sufferings and with them increase the love she felt for Him.

Rose looked for the Infant's visits every day at a regular hour. And if sometimes He did not appear, she felt a holy impatience to which she gave vent in pathetic, reproachful or imploring verse. Once she was heard to bid her guardian angel go and warn the Lord that the hour for His coming had passed :

'Fly, O swift messenger,
Fly to our Lord !
Oh, haste to our Master adored !'

**Ask why He delays, and remains
Far from our side.**

'Tell Him I cannot live
Parted from Him ;
My life then no happiness knows :
In Him only my heart can repose,
Or pleasure can find.

'Fly, noble messenger, fly !
Tell Him when He is not here
I languish alone.
Tell Him His Rose must her sorrow bemoan
Till the moment when He shall return.' *

Another story is told about Rose, how throughout her last Lent a little bird came every evening at sunset and perched upon a tree near her room. There it waited till Rose gave the sign for it to sing. "Begin, dear little bird," she would say, "begin thy lovely song. Let thy little throat pour

forth sweet melodies in praise of the Lord. Open thy little beaks, begin and I will follow thee, and our voices shall together sing a song of holy joy."

At once the little bird would begin to sing. Then it ceased that Rose might sing in her turn. And Rose would sing a hymn of her own composition. Then again the bird would sing. And thus together they celebrated the greatness of God, in turns, for a whole hour. When Rose sang the bird was silent listening attentively to her song and when the bird sang Rose listened. Then at last she dismissed it, saying : "Go, dear little singer, go and fly away. But blessed be my God who never flies from me."

When Rose was about to depart from this world she begged that the mattress and pillows of her bed might be removed, that like her Saviour she might die on the wood. And with the sweet words 'Jesus, Jesus be with me,' she quietly gave up her soul to God.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

1. *Evolution. 2. The Superman.* By Sri Aurobindo Ghose. Published by the Arya Publishing House, 4/1 Rajabagan Junction Road, Simla, Calcutta. Price as. 8 each. Pp. 55 and 28 respectively.

These two thoughtful brochures belong to the learned series of essays—Ideal and Progress, coming from the pen of a master-mind who draws his inspiration from the wisdom of the ancient *Rishis*. We heartily welcome these valuable publications and recommend them to the intellectual circles in India and abroad.

The first book is a sympathetic criticism of the mechanical theory of evolution that resolves everything to matter inconscient. Out of dead nebula, with blind force inherent in it, evolved the physical cosmos and the different types of living beings by successive progression. Thus man, the last step of the evolutionary process, is nothing but a highly complex automaton. This is the conclusion the majority of the modern scientists arrive

at with the help of such dogmatic hypotheses as struggle for existence, natural selection, heredity and the like. The author brings out the fallacies of this suicidal theory one by one and shows, in the light of Sankhya and Vedanta, that it is not unconscious matter marching, in a straight line, to a progressive destination—no one knows where it will end—but a superconscious principle, associated with a power, inscrutable in nature, that evolves by cycles into the panorama of the world. But unlike many over-zealous Idealists who have nothing but condemnation for materialism and ascribe competition, strife, bloodshed, immorality, irreligion and such other nameless evils to its progress, the author gives it its legitimate due and is not blind to the many goods it has done to humanity.

In the second book the author, at first, criticises Nietzsche's fantastic vision of the superman, an ideal that is shocking to mankind in general. He shows beautifully, that the German 'mystic of will-worship' 'with his violent half ideas' distorts the goal of progressive humanity, for his superman,

* Taken from M. de Bussiette's 'Life.'

the expression of man's will to power, is an *asura* who does not feel 'sure of his empire unless he can feel something writhing helpless under his heel,—if in agony, so much the better.' Such a dominion, as Nietzsche paints it, 'is hurtful to a diffused dignity and freedom in mankind.' Besides, his superman 'fiercely and arrogantly repels the burden of sorrow and service, not one who arises victorious over mortality and suffering.' In striking contrast the author presents an ideal that is 'vibrant with the triumph-song of a liberated humanity,' for his ideal man, a harmonious blending of power, love, knowledge and delight, is a joy, a blessing, a benediction to all. Next, under the heading—'All-will and Free-will' he shows, with a series of excellent similes, that the true superman is conscious that he derives his reality from All existence, that it is the All-will and All-knowledge that, while he calculates, works in him for its own incalculable purpose. 'He is like a planet sped out from Nature's hands with its store of primal energy sufficient for its given time, its fixed service to the world-life, its settled orbit round a distant and sovereign Light.' His free-will has become God-will. He knows 'a freedom which sings on the harps of heaven, but which no human speech can utter,' although he chooses to be a mere plaything in the hand of God. But Nietzsche's superman plays at cross purposes with the Divine-will in him and in nature. He lends his 'will-power to be a servant of the nervous part' of his mind 'which, ignorant and passionate, adores itself as its own god.' Lastly in the concluding chapter the author has become classic when he speaks of 'the Delight of works.' The aspirant for true supermanhood should know that the secret of right activity and joy therein consists in defining in oneself the Master, the worker and the instrument. Here we find an echo of the निष्काम कर्मयोग—'the Gospel of Selfless work'—the Lord taught to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita. To quote the author, "Let thy self drive in the breath of God and be as a leaf in the tempest; put thyself in His hand and be as the sword that strikes and the arrow that leaps to its target. Let thy mind be as the spring of the machine, let thy force be as the shooting of a piston, let thy work be as the grinding and shaping descent of the steel on its object.

Let thy speech be the clang of the hammer on the anvil and the moan of the engine in its labour and the cry of the trumpet that proclaims the force of God to the regions."

The Karma-Mimamsa.—By professor A. Berriedale Keith, D. C. L., D. Litt. The Heritage of India Series. Published by the Association Press, 5, Russel Street, Calcutta. Pp. 112. Price—Cloth, Re. 1-8, Paper Re. 1.

The Karma-Mimamsa is based on the Karma-Kanda or work-portion of the Vedas and is therefore, primarily concerned with Vedic sacrifices. It accepts the doctrine of the existence of the soul, an eternal entity distinct from the body, senses and mind, and further believes that sacrifices generate, through Apurva or an unseen potency, their own results, and hence the school recognises no necessity to believe in the doctrine that rewards of sacrificial gifts are to be received from the deities to whom the offerings are made or from God, the creator or disposer of reward and punishment.

In the volume under review containing six chapters, the learned author dwells on the historical survey of the Karma-Mimamsa Philosophy and also on other topics, viz. the problem of knowledge, the world of reality, God, the soul and matter, the rules of ritual interpretation, and the Mimamsa and Hindu law. He gives the views of the different schools of Karma-Mimamsa as represented and developed by Kumarila Bhatta, Prabhakara and other commentators, comparing them with the doctrines of the Nyaya, Vaisesika and Buddhistic Philosophies as occasions arise.

Whatever may be the differences, the liberation of the soul is the ultimate end of all the Hindu Philosophies, though all of them do not have a place for God in their systems. According to all schools the normal lot of the soul "is to continue in an unending cycle of lives, each determined from the outset by his actions in previous lives, unless he adopts the path which leads to freedom from this round of Existence." The process of liberation as sketched by Prabhakara is:—"First the man becomes disgusted by the troubles which attend his mortal life; then he realises that even the pleasures of this

life are inseparable from pain, both in their attainment and in their disappearance; accordingly he devotes his mind to seeking final release from all worldly things. To this end he abstains from all prohibited acts, which lead to punishment hereafter, and also from all acts which are undertaken for the purpose of attaining some worldly or heavenly guerdon. He also exhausts the accumulated store of his merit and demerit by undergoing the experiences which result thence. Finally he destroys the receptacle of experience by the knowledge of the soul, together with such concomitants as contentment, self-restraint and so forth, all things enjoined by the scriptures to prevent the return of the soul. When all this is accomplished, then the achievement of release is brought about.....Kumarila's views are largely in harmony with those of Prabhakara. The final condition, then, of man will be the persistence of pure consciousness, but without cognition or feeling of any sort."

The book satisfies both the conditions of the series; it is scholarly as well as sympathetic. If the subject could be treated in a more popular style it would have been within the easy understanding of the general reader, though no doubt it is a very difficult task as the Purva-Mimamsa is full of technicalities. The author, we are glad to find, maintains throughout an impartial standpoint

without identifying himself with any school. We heartily recommend the book to our readers.

A Manual of Translation, from English into Hindi.

By Pandit Ramdahin Misra and Babu Sivapujan Sahay. Published by the Granthamala Karyalaya, Bankipore. Crown 8vo. Pp. 250. Price Re. 1-4.

This handy volume is intended as a help-book for students learning to translate from English into Hindi, on which subject it appears there are very few books. After giving some useful general hints the authors have tried to explain clearly and elaborately all the points the student should know on the subject in question. The different parts of speech with their subdivisions have been exhaustively treated, and half the book is devoted to verbal phrases alone. Since each English phrase and sentence find their equivalents in it, the book will also be of use to those who would learn English through the medium of Hindi. We congratulate the authors on the success they have attained in the treatment of the subject.

It is unfortunate, however, that the book was hurried through the press, with the result that a good many mistakes have crept in, some of which are serious ones and ought to be corrected by adding an errata-slip as early as possible.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 187.)

भीशुक उवाच ।

इत्यादिष्टो भगवता महाभागवतो नृप ।
उद्धवः प्रणिपत्याह तस्वजिष्ठासुरच्युतम् ॥१३॥

Suka said :

13. O king being thus commanded by the Lord, the great devotee Uddhava, desirous to know the truth, prostrated himself before Sri Krishna and said :

उद्धव उवाच ।

योगेण योगविम्न्यास योगात्मन्योगसंभव ।
निर्धेयसाय मे प्रोक्तस्यागः संन्याससञ्चाणः ॥१४॥

Uddhava said :

14. O Lord of Yoga, O Thou Treasure¹ of the Yogins, Thou Embodiment of Yoga, from whom Yoga emanates, for my liberation Thou hast recommended to me the path of renunciation known as Sannyasa.

[¹ Treasure etc.—A slightly different reading—बोग-विन्द्वास—would give the meaning, “Thou on whom Yoga is concentrated.”]

ल्यागीऽयं दुष्करो भूमन् कामानां विषयात्मभिः ।
सुतरां त्वयि सर्वात्मजभक्तैरिति मे मतिः ॥१५॥

15. O Infinite, I consider this renunciation of desires as difficult for worldly-minded people, and the more so for those who are not devoted to Thee, who art the Self of all.

सोऽहं ममाद्विमिति शूद्रमतिर्विगाह-
स्वव्याप्तायथा विरचितारमनि सानुवन्धे ।
तत्त्वज्ञसा निगदितं भवता यथाहं
संसाधयामि भगवत्तुयाचि भूत्यम् ॥१३॥

16. I¹ am but a fool, being passionately attached to this body² and its appertances—which are the creation of Thy Mâyâ³—and considering these as 'I and mine'; gently so, instruct Thy servant, O Lord, so that I can faithfully carry out what Thou hast taught me.

[*I am etc.*—The एः in the text means: 'Whom Thou dost consider as fit for Sannyâsa.'

²*Body etc.*—The body is erroneously considered as 'I' and children and property etc., as 'mine.'

³*Mâyâ*—The inscrutable Power of the Lord—nay, the Lord Himself in action.]

सत्यस्ते स्वदृष्टा आत्मन आत्मोऽन्यं
बक्तारमीय विकुर्वेष्वपि नातुवचे ।
सर्वे विमोहितभियस्त्व भाययेमे
ब्रह्मादयस्ततुभृतो बहिरूपेभावाः ॥१४॥

17. O Lord, even among the gods I find no other teacher of the Self than Thee who art Self-effulgent, the Truth, the Atman; for Brahmâ¹ and all other embodied beings (whom we know of) are deluded by Thy Mâyâ, and consider the objective world a reality.

[¹*Brahmâ etc.*—Their illumination is no doubt very great, but still they are nothing compared with Thee.]

तत्साज्ज्ञवन्तमनवद्यमनन्तपारं
सर्वद्वयीश्वरमकुरुठविकुरुठधिष्ठयम् ।
निर्विरणवीरदमु ह वृजिनाभितसो
नारायणं नरसं यरणं प्रदेये ॥१५॥

18. Therefore, afflicted by sins and dispirited, do I take my refuge in Thee who art¹ unimpeachable, infinite and eternal, omniscient, the Lord of the universe, who dwellest in the changeless Vaikuatha, who art the Supreme Being Nârâyana,² and the Friend of man.

[¹ *Who art etc.*—In every respect Thou art my best Refuge.

²*Nârâyana*—in whom Brahmâ and all finally merge.]

भीभगवानुवाच ।
ग्रायेण भनुजा लोके लोकतस्वविचल्याः ।
समुद्धरन्ति हात्मानमात्मनैवानुभायात् ॥१६॥

The Lord said:

19. Very often in the world men who have truly discerned the truth about the universe deliver themselves from evil inclinations through their own exertions.

[In this and the following verses the Lord encourages Uddhava to exert for Self-knowledge, specially as he was fortunate enough to get such a perfect Guru.]

आत्मनो गुरुरात्मैव पुरुषस्य विशेषतः ।
यत्प्रत्यक्षानुभानाऽर्थां भेयोऽसाधनुविन्दते ॥२०॥

20. The Self alone is the teacher of all beings, and specially of men, for It conduces to well-being through direct perception and inference.

पुरुषस्ये च ग्रां भीराः सांख्ययोगविदारदाः ।
आविस्तरां प्रपश्यन्ति सर्वेषांस्युपर्युद्दितम् ॥२१॥

21. Those who are of a balanced mind and are skilled in Knowledge and Yoga behold Me in the human body as fully manifest¹ and endowed with all powers.

[¹*Fully manifest etc.*—An echo of the Suti passage: पुरुषस्ये च आविस्तरात्मात्मा &c.—"In the human body the Atman is most manifest. There, being most endowed with illumination, It speaks cogent words and sees approved conduct; knows present duties, and heaven and hell; wishes

immortality through this mortal frame;—thus is It pre-eminently gifted. While the inferior animals have knowledge of hunger and thirst merely.”]

एकद्वित्रिचतुष्पादो वतुपादस्तथाऽपदः ।

षष्ठ्य सन्ति पुरः सूक्ष्मस्तासां मे पौरुषी प्रिया ॥

22. There are many created cities¹ such as those with one, two, three, four, or many legs, as well as without legs; of these the human body is My favourite city.

[¹Cities—i. e. bodies.]

अत्र मां मार्गयन्त्यदा युक्ता हेतुभिरीश्वरम् ।

पृथग्माणैर्गुणैर्विजैरप्राप्नुमनन्तः ॥२३॥

23. In this, men who have controlled their senses directly seek me, the inscrutable Lord, through attributes¹ such as the intellect etc., that are perceived, and by means of inference² through those indications.

[¹Through attributes etc.—This method is known as *Arthapatti* or implication. The intellect etc. are inert, and must have some Self-essfulgent Unit Principle behind them to make them active. This is the Atman.

²Inference etc.—The intellect etc. are instruments of knowledge and as such require some intelligent agent to use them.

It should be noted that these processes simply clear our notion about the Atman, of which we hear from the *Sruti*.]

अप्राप्युदाहरन्तीममितिहासं पुरातनम् ।

अवधूतस्य संवादं यदोरमितेजसः ॥२४॥

24. Regarding this they also cite an old tale comprising the dialogue between *Yadu*,¹ of matchless valour, and an *Avadhuta*.

[¹*Yadu*—was the son of *Yayati* and grandson of *Nahusha*, powerful Kings of the Lunar Race, and ancestors of Sri Krishna.]

अवधूतं द्विजं कंचिचरन्तमकुतोभयम् ।

कर्वि निरीक्ष्य तरुणं यतुः पप्रच्छ धर्मवित् ॥२५॥

25. Seeing a learned and young Brah-

min *Avadhuta*¹ roaming fearlessly, *Yadu* who was versed in religion asked him :

[¹*Avadhuta*—a class of liberated saints who wear no external badge, and whose realisation of sameness in everything lifts them above the ordinary duties of life.]

यतुरुचाच ।

कुतो बुद्धिरियं ब्रह्मधरकतुः सुविद्यारदा ।

यामासाद्य भर्वाल्लाकं विद्वांश्वरति यादवत् ॥२५॥

Yadu said :

26. O Brahmin, free from action as you are, whence have you got this excellent discernment, attaining which you roam over the world like a child, although you are a sage ?

प्रायो धर्मांश्चामेषु विवित्सार्थं च मानवाः ।

हेतुनैव समीक्ष्यते आयुगो यथासः भियः ॥२६॥

27. Most often men exert themselves for virtue, wealth, desire and enquiry about the Atman, and that too with the motive of gaining longevity, fame and prosperity.

[The king tries to show how far removed the saint was from ordinary men.]

स्वं तु जल्पः कायिर्देवः सुभगोऽसूतभाषणः ।

न कर्ता नेहसे किञ्चिच्चउद्देश्यपिण्डवत् ॥२७॥

28. But you, in spite of your being able, learned, dexterous, well-formed and possessed of mellifluous speech, neither work nor exert in the least, as if you were an idiot, or a lunatic or a ghoul.

[There is nothing to prevent you from asserting your rightful position in the world.]

जनेषु दृष्ट्यामानेषु कामज्ञोभद्रवाप्निना ।

न तत्परेऽप्निना मुक्तो गङ्गाम्भस्य इव द्विपः ॥२८॥

29. While people are being scorched by the forest-fire of lust and greed, you are not heated by the fire, being free from its influence like an elephant in the midst of Ganges water.

(To be continued).

NEWS AND NOTES.

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Famine Relief Work,**Khulna.**

The following appeal has been sent to the Press by the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission :—

Previously the Ramakrishna Mission published in the newspapers appeals regarding the famine at Khulna. As both the cloth and food distress is gradually growing acute and the grim face of malaria has already appeared in the affected area, it again appeals to the generosity of the public to contribute as far as practicable for them either new or old cloths or money towards the relief of these sufferers. The Mission has not been able to do practically anything either for the cloth-distress or for the extension of the work on account of the want of funds. It has taken up 59 villages and is distributing rice among 1422 recipients at the rate of 2 seers per head per week without any distinction of age or sex. The weekly expense of the Mission's work is about Rs. 600. On the 6th July 34 villages received help and on the 10th August the sphere of the work extended to 59 villages. Contributions will be thankfully received by (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Dt. Howrah, (2) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

(Sd.) Saradananda,
Secretary, Rk. M.

Sri Krishna as an Ideal Character

The birthday of Sri Krishna was celebrated on Friday, the 26th August, all over India, and it is a fact that no other Teacher exerts so much influence on the lives of the Hindus, and is similarly worshipped throughout the length and breadth of the country. "The other Incarnations were but parts of God. Sri Krishna was indeed the Lord Himself." The truth of this assertion of the Srimad-Bhagavatam we come to realise, when we think of the unique personality of the Master. He was the type of perfect manhood—a devoted son, a passionate lover, an affectionate friend, an ideal king, a consummate diplomat, a profound philosopher of the rarest genius, all

in one ; and in the midst of all attachments perfectly non-attached ! In Him was the wonderful combination of all great virtues. He was, in short, the very personification of the teachings of the Gita—the perfect synthesis of Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga. And in an age when the minds of men are being torn asunder by the conflict of ideals, may this aspect of Sri Krishna's all-round personality inspire us in the performance of our duty, individual and national, and lead us all by diverse paths to attain the perfection of which He was Himself the embodiment and preacher !

Alcohol and Crime

Sir Evelyn Ruggles, Chairman of the Prison Commission for England and Wales and President of the International Prison Commission, has recently published a notable book on the working of the English prison system. The author declares that drunkenness is the cause of one third of all the admissions into prison and estimates that alcohol enters as a contributing factor into about 50 per cent. of offences committed in any given year. 'To legislate, therefore, against drink,' he writes, 'is indirectly to legislate against crime.'

Legislation will no doubt produce some effect but it is beyond its capacity to cure the evil of drink and other moral diseases. To achieve any permanent results it is necessary to go to the very root of the matter and create a revolutionary change in the minds of men. Persuasion or even intimidation cannot check any social evil for a considerable time. Evil tendencies are to be eradicated first, by creating a highly moral atmosphere and secondly, by imparting an ethical training that will strengthen the moral fibre of men. This applies especially to comparatively well-to-do people.

It is a deplorable fact that many among the masses take to alcoholic liquors and intoxicating drugs often to forget at least temporarily their miserable existence. A large number take toddy and other cheap intoxicants, as an excise officer once said, to appease their hunger. Thus in many

cases drinking has unfortunately become an associate of poverty, and therefore the moral tone in most of these cases cannot be improved without bettering the economic condition.

Poverty and Disease

Though fortunately in India poverty is not a crime, it is inseparably connected with disease. Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee in his speech at the conference with Newspaper Editors on the problem of health in Bengal is reported to have spoken : "I have heard it said that the poverty of the people is largely responsible for the prevalence of malaria in Bengal. Remove their poverty and malaria will disappear. This view is not to be dismissed as unworthy of consideration or as having no element of truth in it. Obviously poverty by enfeebling the physical system reduces its power of resistance against the encroachments of disease. It is well-known that plague is the poor man's disease and that the rich are more or less immune against its attacks. The connection between poverty and malarial fever is however closer and more intimate than what appears from this general interdependence between poverty and disease. The truth is that the conditions which produce malarial fever are the self-same conditions which produce poverty by causing agricultural deterioration. That is the outstanding lesson which the history of malarial fever, wherever it has prevailed, teaches with convincing force."

In times of acute distress temporary relief measures are no doubt very helpful. But even permanent relief measures, if it is possible to conduct them, will not be able to solve the problem of poverty and disease. "All the wealth of the world," as Swami Vivekananda says, "cannot help one little Indian village if the people are not taught to help themselves." Permanent results can be achieved only when the government and the rich would devote a substantial portion of the money they receive from the people to save the poor from scarcity and disease by improving their economic and sanitary conditions. And side by side with these measures steps should be taken "to start societies to educate the people, so that they may learn to be self-reliant, frugal and not given to marrying, and thus save themselves from future famine." Proper education will enable the

people not only to cope with poverty but also to improve sanitation and check the havoc of disease as much as in them lies.

The Awakening of the Poor

Mr. C. F. Andrews in an article to the Modern Review for August entitled "The Oppression of the Poor" writes :—

When I was asked the question a short time ago,—"What is the central problem of India today?" the answer that came to my lips, without a moment's hesitation was this,—"The Oppression of the Poor."

He further speaks of the awakening of the masses from his personal experience in the following words—"They are becoming more and more certain, that the hour of their freedom is at hand. During the past few months, it has been my lot in life to travel over almost every part of North India, from East to West and from West to East,—to places as far distant from one another as Sindh and East Bengal. On these journeys, I have seen strange happenings and witnessed a new spirit. This new spirit, I am convinced, goes far deeper than the political movement of our times. It has its own initial impulse from the poor. Again and again it has appeared to me to bear striking analogy to what we read in history concerning the fateful days before the French Revolution, when the oppressed peasantry of France awoke to the new idea of equality and brotherhood of Man.....The countless millions of the poor in India are all astir. They are coming forth out of their long dark night of ignorance and oppression."

Mr. Andrews again says with a very full heart—"How wonderful is this spring of freshness that ever wells up from the hearts of the poor! And withal, how tragic is their suffering! People have often spoken slightly of the poor, and called them the 'lower classes,' as though the illiterate were also the unlearned. But it is not so in truth. There is a wisdom and a refinement, which come from the very suffering itself which the poor have constantly to bear. Who are we to despise them?"

Truly speaking the masses have preserved, inspite of their illiteracy, the national culture and tradition unlike the so-called educated man who is the product of a hybrid culture. And it is the

bounden duty of all thoughtful Indians to take up without any more loss of time the cause of the poor and help them to fight poverty and ignorance; and it is certain that for any further neglect they would have to repent in the future.

Karma and Re-birth in Christianity

The following passages occur in a letter, published sometime back in the Times of Ceylon, written by Dr. W. Y. Evans Wentz, an American Oxford Scholar—"The essential teachings of Jesus, parallel to the teachings of Buddha, were Karma and Re-birth, expunged from dogmatic Christianity by the Council of Constantinople, at the time of the condemnation of Origen, who held them and whose right for holding them has now been established by recent results of scholarship.....The West, especially America, is rapidly discarding Church doctrines. The wonderful reception accorded to such Hindu missionaries as Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ram Tirth, is a clear indication of this revolutionary movement in Western thought. To-day the two great doctrines, Karma and Re-birth, supported, as I personally know, by many of the first men of science, have already changed the whole tone of Western speculation and even of Western literature."

In another letter to the same paper Dr. Evans Wentz says:—"The doctrine of the Divine Incarnation is not, nor ever has been, the sole property of Christianity as.....orthodox Christians commonly seem to assume. Hinduism, for example, teaches that Divinity has manifested Itself in bodily form already eight times in our world rather than once, the Buddha being the eighth *avatara*. The ninth *avatara*, yet to come, will be the future saviour of the whole human race, eagerly awaited by Hindus, Buddhists and Christians.

"Many learned Brahmins as well as many learned Buddhists are openly prepared to accept the Doctrine of the Divine Incarnation of Jesus, but not that He is the sole manifestation among mankind of the Supreme or that His teachings are the only Path, although one of the Paths, leading to spiritual emancipation."

The doctrine of Re-incarnation is based on the

law of Karma and if rightly understood, it would make man responsible for his actions whether good or bad and furnish him with a strength that would make it unnecessary for him to depend on chance, or to take shelter under a doctrine of parasitic salvation or vicarious atonement.

The doctrine of Re-incarnation had a prominent place in the systems of many of the ancient Greek philosophers. Besides, Origen, one of the most learned of Church Fathers, maintained :—'Divine Providence disposes each according to his tendency, mind and disposition.....I think this is a question how it happens that the human mind is influenced now by the good, now by the evil. The cause of this I suspect to be more ancient than this corporeal birth.' This idea was also an article of faith of the Gnostics and Manicheans. It spread widely among the ancient Christians until Justinian suppressed it by passing in the Council of Constantinople in 538 A. D., a law that anathematised those who believed in the doctrine of the Pre-existence and Re-incarnation of the soul. This doctrine has re-asserted itself, and students of modern literature and philosophy in the West very often come across this idea. The great English philosopher Hume, though nihilistic, went so far as to conclude—"The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can listen to." And not rarely one learns about similar ideas being expressed from even the pulpits of some of the Christian churches in the West especially in America.

It is a fact that there are many Hindus who sincerely regard Jesus Christ as one of the Incarnations of God. But they are at a loss to understand why the Incarnation of Nazareth should be regarded as the only Incarnation of God. To them the words of Sri Krishna, "Whenever virtue subsides and immorality prevails, then I body Myself forth" appeals to be more reasonable than the claim of a particular religion that believes in the existence of only one Incarnation of God.

The doctrine of Karma and Re-birth is more widely accepted than that of God's Incarnation. In India the Buddhists and Jains do not believe in God but the laws of Karma and Re-incarnation

form the corner-stone of their philosophies. Again it is equally accepted by certain sects in India, some of which are already formed while others are in the process of formation, which though believing in God, profess to have discarded the doctrine of Divine Incarnation along with the use of images and symbols in worship; but not unfrequently there are at least some among their followers who show an idolatrous veneration towards their own great men and even feel the necessity to have their own saints and martyrs, for there are certain types of human natures that cannot but feel such a necessity for their spiritual culture.

In the Christian Gospel there are passages which unmistakably speak of the soul's Pre-existence and Re-incarnation, although they are generally interpreted in a different light. But whatever it may be, we fail to understand why those who accept Christ as their Ishtam or Ideal have also to put their implicit faith in the Semitic traditions that have been traced by modern researches to even various non-Semitic sources. We should now learn to sift the essentials from the non-essentials of a religion and therefore, loyalty to a certain religion need no longer be followed by the disloyalty to the race of one's own forefathers and the acceptance of even the traditions and prejudices, manners and customs, and food and dress connected with the particular faith. It is but quite rational that faith in Christ can in no way be affected by the belief in the soul's Pre-existence and Re-birth. We hope our Indian Christian brethren will devote their serious thoughts to this momentous question.

Education in British India

The August number of the *Saraswati* publishes an interesting article from the pen of Pandit M. P. Dwivedi, based on the Government of India's educational report for the year ending in March, 1920, published recently by the Bureau of Education. We glean the following statistics from it:—

At the end of the year under review a little over 82 lacs of students were receiving education in British India, showing an increase of over 2½ lacs over the number of the preceding year. The number of colleges and schools during the year were as follows—216 Colleges, 2,113 High Schools,

3,295 Middle English Schools, 3,300 Middle Vernacular Schools, 155,344 Primary Schools, and 4,090 Schools of other denominations. In each of these there has been a more or less increase, especially of over 5000 in the Primary Schools which of course include a good many that teach only infants. The ratio of students to population in each province is as follows: Burma 4·75, Bombay 4·48, Bengal 4·28, Madras 4·18, C. P. and Berar 2·57, Behar and Orissa 2·45, Assam 3·47, Punjab and U. P. 2·15 each. So the Punjab and United Provinces fare worst in the list. The total expenses for education have been about 15 crores of Rupees, of which about 6½ crores only have been spent by the Government, the remainder being received from Municipalities and District Boards, from fees, and from other sources, such as donations etc. It is interesting to note that Primary Education has been made compulsory in certain provinces, where, however, with the partial exception of Bengal, it is restricted to municipal areas only. In some places it has been made free. The number of girls' schools during the year was 22,862, teaching about 13 lacs of girls. This number, though in excess of that of the previous year, is hardly satisfactory, as it comes to almost 1 per cent. of the female population in British India.

Education is the best known solvent of all the ills that India is heir to at the present day. The fearful recrudescence of famines and virulent pestilential diseases, the deplorable economic condition of the masses and middle classes, the appalling degree of child mortality and other calamities of like nature which Indians with the characteristic equanimity of a degenerated people ascribe to the blessed deity, Destiny, could be well remedied by a fairer adjustment of means to ends. It is high time that the Indians should concentrate their attention on this all-important but sadly neglected blessing of life. What a vast progress the West has made simply through the spread of education! Look upon this picture, and upon this!

Swami Sharvananda's Lectures in Ceylon

Under the auspices of the Vivekananda Library Association, Jaffna, a very interesting and instructive lecture on "True Swaraj" was delivered by Swami Sharvananda, President of the Ramakrishna

tion Branch at Madras, on Thursday, the 9th August, in the Hindu College Hall at 6-30 p. m. A crowded audience. The Y. M. H. A., Petta, arranged for a lecture on "Swami Vivekananda and his Message" on 11th Aug. at 6-30 p. m. in the Ridgeway Memorial Hall. The Swamiji delivered another lecture on "The Spirit of Hinduism" at the Reading Hall in the Y. M. H. A., Karaitivu, on Saturday, the 13th Aug. at 5 p. m.

Swami Abhedananda's Closing Lecture in San Francisco, America

Swami Abhedananda, the leader of the Vedanta Ashrama of San Francisco, closed his Sunday morning services on June 26th at Los Angeles Hall, in Native Sons' Building, by giving a comprehensive discourse on the Spiritual Evolution of the Soul. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity by an appreciative audience.

The Swami dwelt at first on the evolution of the conception of God, beginning with ancestor worship, passing through Polytheism, Monotheism, Dualism, Qualified non-Dualism and ending in Advaita Vedanta (Monism). In conclusion the Swami showed in a masterly manner how the soul rising from the animal plane evolves into human and develops mentally, morally and spiritually until it reaches perfection and becomes divine. The large audience was held spell-bound by the eloquence and inspiring words of the Swami.

When Swami Abhedananda announced that at the call of his beloved Motherland, which has been with him for some time, he was returning to India during his vacation, every person in the audience felt deeply that the absence of the Swami would be a great loss to all who have been studying with him and attending his lectures and instructions.

On Monday evening, June 27th, the Swami gave his closing lecture on the Bhagavad-Gita before a large audience and showed that the teachings of Krishna (the Hindu Christ) contained the fundamental principles underlying the teachings of Jesus the Christ.

At the close of the lecture the members of the Vedanta Ashrama presented him with a farewell address. Miss A. M. Witman, the Secretary of the Vedanta Society of Los Angeles founded by Swami Abhedananda, spoke as a representative of

the students from that Centre and expressed how deeply all the students in Los Angeles would miss the Swami and his teachings during his absence.

Mr. E. C. Brown, President of the Hindu Temple of San Francisco, gave an impressive address describing the good pioneering work that had been done so splendidly by Swami Abhedananda during his stay in America for the past twenty-five years. He also emphasised the value of the prolific published works of the Swami which contain lucid and masterly interpretation of abstruse philosophical subjects in the light of the truths taught in Vedanta.

In response the Swami spoke about the difficulties he had to overcome in his pioneering work of spreading the truth of Vedanta as a successor to the world renowned Swami Vivekananda and emphasised the ideals of the East and the West which when united would bring harmony, peace and spiritual uplift to the people of the whole world.

Swami Abhedananda's work in this city for a year and a half has interested many new seekers of Truth who for the first time have heard the message of Vedanta. It has also furthered the growth of the influence of the Vedanta movement which is now ably carried on by Swami Prakashananda at the Hindu Temple in San Francisco.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Seva-Ashrama, Kankhal, Dt. Shaharanpur, U. P.

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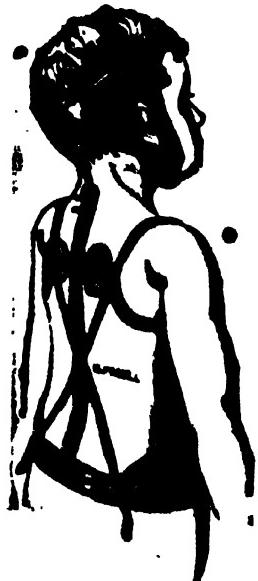
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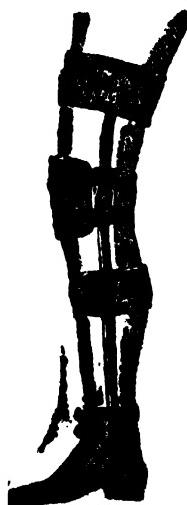
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Vivekananda.

Vol. XXVI]

OCTOBER 1921

[No. 303

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Q. How can Vedanta be realised?

A. By 'hearing, reflection and meditation.' Hearing must take place from a Sad-guru. Even if one is not a regular disciple, but is a fit aspirant and hears the Sad-guru's words, one is liberated.

Q. Who is a Sad-guru?

A. A Sad-guru is one on whom the spiritual power has descended by Guru-parampara, or an unbroken chain of discipleship.

To play the role of a spiritual teacher is a very difficult thing. One has to take on oneself the sins of others. There is every chance of a fall in less advanced men. If merely physical pain ensues, then he should consider himself fortunate.

Q. Cannot the spiritual teacher make the aspirant fit?

A. An Avatara can. Not an ordinary Guru.

Q. Is there no easy way to liberation?

A. 'There is no royal road to Geometry,'—except for those who have been fortunate enough to come in contact with an Avatar. Paramahansa Deva used to say, "One who is having his last birth shall somehow or other see me."

Q. Is not Yoga an easy path to that?

A. (Jokingly) You have said well, I see!—Yoga an easy path! If your mind be not pure and you try to follow Yoga, you will perhaps attain some supernatural power, but that will be a hindrance. Therefore purity of mind is the first thing necessary.

Q. How can this be attained?

A. By good work. Good work is of two kinds, positive and negative. 'Do not steal'—that is a negative mandate, and 'do good to others'—is a positive one.

Q. Should not doing good to others be performed in a higher stage, for if performed in a lower stage, it may bind one to the world?

A. It should be performed in the first stage. One who has any desire, at first gets deluded and becomes bound, but not others. Gradually it will become very natural.

Q. Sir, last night you said, 'In you is everything.' Now, if I want to be like Vishnu, shall I have to meditate on the form also, or only on the idea?

A. According to capacity one may follow either way.

Q. What is the means of realisation?

A. The Guru is the means of realisation. "There is no knowledge without a teacher."

Q. Some say that there is no necessity of practising meditation in a worship-room. How far is it true?

A. Those who have already realised the Lord's presence may not require it, but for others it is necessary. One, however, should go beyond the form and meditate on the impersonal aspect of God,

for no form can grant liberation. You may get worldly prosperity from the sight of the form. One who ministers to his mother succeeds in this world; one who worships his father goes to heaven; but the worshipper of a Sadhu gets knowledge and devotion.

Q. What is the meaning of ब्रह्मिन् सज्जन-सप्तिका &c.—"Even a moment's association with the holy ones serves to take one beyond this relative existence"?

A. A fit person coming in contact with a true Sadhu attains to liberation. True Sadhus are very rare, but their influence is such that a great writer has said, "Hypocrisy is the tribute which vice pays to virtue." But Avatars are Kapālamochanas, that is, they can alter the doom of people. They can stir the whole world. The least dangerous and best form of worship is worshipping man. One who has got the idea of Brahman in a man, has realised it in the whole universe. Monasticism and the householder's life are both good, according to different circumstances. Knowledge is the only thing necessary.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

IT is an established psychological fact that the man of uncritical mind is inclined to attribute the miseries and troubles of his earthly existence to outside causes and make others responsible even for his own actions, especially when they prove to be disastrous in their effects. So wide-spread has been the hold of this idea that in their attempt to find an explanation for the presence of evil in the universe, the followers of some of the

religions of the world have gone so far as to believe in the existence of a seducer, an arch-enemy of man as much as in that of an extra-cosmic God, the creator and ruler of the universe. And it is also too true that there are persons having so peculiar a mental constitution that they find it impossible to think of a religion as advocating morality, which has no place in its system of a Satan who wages an interminable war with God and leads men

astray from the path of rectitude and truth.

But as man evolves and becomes more and more introspective he finds the solution of all such problems within himself and no longer stands in need of an objective explanation. He finds in himself the two opposite tendencies of good and evil that are constantly at war with each other and these should, therefore, be transcended that he may attain peace that neither waxes nor wanes. Further as his mind becomes more and more clear and analytic, upon it gradually dawns the conception of an immanent God who is the Self of all, and the common stay of all that exists, without being affected in the least by the attributes of things, good or otherwise. Such a person endowed with a critical mind no longer thinks himself to be a mere automaton under the sway of outside influences, but feels in his heart of hearts that he is the maker of his own destiny and is himself fully responsible for all his physical and mental actions whatever their nature may be. In such a conception of man's possibility and responsibility lies the foundation of all true strength and morality.

The most outstanding feature in the national life of the European and the American races is the tremendous faith that resides in their hearts, though they may not generally possess any belief in the higher spiritual Self. It is the intense faith in their own potentiality that is undoubtedly the secret of their success in the various departments of life and the fountain-head of the strength that has enabled them to attain phenomenal success in being the rulers of the destinies of nations that lack the spirit of self-

reliance and self-confidence. If faith in the lower and apparent self can accomplish this, how much more should be the achievement of the power of the faith in the Spirit, the real Self of man !

आत्मा विन्दते शीर्षं विद्या विन्दते दृष्टम्—"By the realisation of the Atman does man gain strength. By the highest knowledge does he attain immortality." This message of strength is the main theme of the greatest of the Hindu Scriptures, the immortal Upanishads, and if rightly understood it brings strength to the weak, makes a saint of a sinner, infuses hope in the depressed, gives a new meaning to life and endows man with an integrity of character that never allows him to stoop down to perform actions that are mean and selfish. And the person who stands on the glory of the Soul gains in spirit as the Divinity within shines forth through him in all its splendour. No more need he cling to the role of a beggar, hoping to command respect from others by supplication and prayer, nor try to win others' heart by flattery and fawning. Before the power of such a sterling character all cannot but bow down their heads with respect and love, because the claim of strength is imperative and it does not stand in need of any help whatsoever to assert itself.

In one of the oldest and most admirable of the Upanishads we read that before the beginning of creation the Atman only existed, and once He was overtaken by fear as He felt Himself to be alone and helpless; but when He meditated within Himself and came to think, "Why shall I entertain any fear since there is none else but Myself?"—fear left Him, for it is duality that is the parent of fear. The deep significance of this narrative lies in

the fact that it speaks in glowing terms of the glory of the Atman. Man who in his essential nature is no other than the Spirit Absolute, hypnotises himself by conjuring up things that do not really exist and forgetting the Divinity within thinks himself to be under the thrall of matter and feels miserable. But when with the dawn of knowledge the truth is brought home to him that he is the Soul of the Universe, the One without a second, then आनन्दं भूत्वा विद्वान् न विमलि कुरुते—“realising the bliss of Brahman he does not entertain fear from any quarter.” Being established in the Unity, the Rishi remains undaunted in the presence of death, for he knows that the Spirit cannot die; in the midst of the greatest dangers he maintains a perfect equanimity of mind as he feels that the Atman is untouched by the superimpositions of Mâyâ and is never a bond-slave of matter. It is this realisation that gives him the abiding strength of self-assurance that cannot be shaken by doubts or ignorance.

Few individuals, however high their claims to perfection, are really free from failings and defects that human beings are heir to. The average human character is a combination of both strength and weakness. No doubt it is quite enigmatic to think how entirely opposite qualities can exist side by side in the highly complex personality of man, but nevertheless it is a statement of fact. Blinded as man ordinarily is by egoism and directed as his vision is towards things external, he cannot detect his own weakness but is ever conscious of the faults and drawbacks of those around him. This is the root-cause of almost all misunderstandings and misrepresentations that lead to the unfortunate quarrels and struggles

that disturb the peace and prosperity of individuals as well as of nations.

The first step that should be taken by one who really aspires after self-improvement is to make a thorough analysis of his own character and form a right estimate of all good and evil qualities and tendencies. No sincere soul can possibly deny the existence of weakness in himself. But the remedy does not consist in brooding over the sins and helplessness whether of his own self or of others. Inside every one, even in the so-called most degraded sinner, is lodged the infinite power to manifest purity and knowledge. This faith in the soul's latent strength alone can enliven the down-hearted, energise the morbid and eradicate the very source of self-hypnotisation that debases and weakens man—the greatest superstition that falsely identifies the Self with the not-Self and keeps It entangled in the meshes of Mâyâ. It is this keynote of Upanishadic teachings that the great messenger of the Gospel of Strength, Swami Vivekananda, struck again and again when he spoke to his countrymen and co-religionists: “Stand and die in your own strength; if there is any sin in the world, it is weakness; avoid all weakness, for weakness is sin, weakness is death.....Awake, arise! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak; the Soul is infinite, omnipotent and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you, do not deny! Too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism, has been and is upon our race. O ye modern Hindus, de-hypnotise yourselves. The way to do that is found in your own sacred books.”

THE PLACE OF UPÁSANÁ IN THE VEDÁNTA.

LIfe is a component of two factors, one the internal and the other external. In each act of consciousness we perceive these dual elements woven and interwoven with each other. The objective world sends a stimulus to our brain and the mind interprets this stimulus. The world which we see and feel around us, considered as a whole, is one, but how infinitely varied are our readings of this one and the same universe! The self-same object is looked at from a thousand different angles of vision, and produces in us feelings of diametrically opposite natures. Here, for instance, is a female form. It is one so far as God has fashioned it, but how differently people view this piece of God's creation! The woman is the daughter to her father, a sister to her brother, to others she is a neighbour, the servants of the house look upon her as the mistress, to her child she is the loving mother, to her husband she is the beloved wife, to a stranger she is simply a woman, and so on! So many variations in thought regarding a single object! These relations, again, vary according to differences of place, time and condition, altogether presenting an infinite multiplicity of aspects. Such indeed is the world.

It is the mind which serves as the interpreter to all phenomena we come across. It is this magician's wand that "makes a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." Between man and the universe *as it is*, there is always this veil, this barrier, thoroughly opaque to some, translucent to others, and transparent to only a chosen few. It dyes with its own tinge whatever is seen through it, and we must make a compromise with it before we can arrive at a

desired conception of any worldly phenomenon, before we can have just the thing that suits our own taste. The author of the Bhāgavatam beautifully expresses this variety in the midst of unity engendered by the mind, in the following verse in which he describes the youthful Krishna's entrance into the arena of King Kamsa for a tournament—

क्षत्रियां भृत्यरः क्षत्रियां भृत्यरः मृत्युनाम् ।
मांशानां स्व जनोऽस्तनां लितिभृजां शास्त्रा स्वपिचाः पितृः ।
मृत्युभूमेऽजरंतरितादिविद्यां तस्मै परं वाणिगनां ।
दृष्ट्यालां परदेवतानि विर्दिष्टो दक्षं यतः साप्तजः ॥

—“To the wrestlers, like one whose body had the strength of thunder; to the assembled men a prince among men; to the women, the very embodiment of love; to the cowherds, their own kinsman; to the wicked kings, a chastiser; to his parents, their darling; to king Kamsa, Death itself; to the ignorant, a mere boy of undeveloped features; to the Yogins, the highest Principle; and to the Vrishnis (the line to which Sri Krishna belonged), their supreme Deity;—appearing in such manifold ways, did Sri Krishna enter the arena, accompanied by his brother, Balarama.”

The ideas of bondage and liberation also are the creation of mind. As you think, so you become,—this is the unanimous verdict of time-honoured scriptures. It is not at all the question whether a man is actually bound or not; once allow that he so thinks, and he is then and there converted into a bound soul. Instances of this overwhelming power of thought must have come to the notice of all. A man walking along a jungly track in the evening feels that something has stung at his foot, and the inveterate association

of snakes with woods at once suggests to him the idea that he has been bitten by a snake, possibly a venomous snake, and in two minutes he sinks to the ground, declaring he is dying. A comrade drags him with difficulty to a snake-bite expert's house, where he lies almost senseless on the ground. The expert examines the cut and tries his skill to find out if the bite is poisonous or not. Once, twice, he finds no indication of poison. He tries a third time, and with amazement declares that nothing is the matter, it must be the sting of some insect. The patient hears this welcome announcement, sits up, and the next moment he is wending his way to his destination, regretting that he has needlessly lost so much time! Such is the influence of hypnotisation,—in many cases, self-hypnotisation,—and, baseless though it may be, once you are under it, you must undergo a lot of trouble to remove it. There is no other way out. This is the penalty one has to pay for fooling oneself so as to come under the hypnotic spell.

We are, say the scriptures, all deluded like that. How or whence this delusion came—nobody knows. It is futile to make this enquiry. But anyhow it has come, and the next step is to seek a way out of it, rather than ruefully trace its etiology—how it arose and all that. This way out, as has been suggested above, lies in ascertaining the true state of things—in knowing positively and indubitably, that *nothing is the matter*, that we are now, as we have always been, the Self-
effulgent Brahman, so much glorified in the Vedas and Upanishads, and that it is our self-hypnotisation that leads us to think we are puny weaklings, drifting at the mere breath of circumstances. When, as the result of successive experiences,

the world with its kaleidoscopic changes appears too trivial a thing to engross our serious attention, when we are sick of its phantom joys and cruel disappointments, when from the inmost recesses of our heart there comes forth the cry to get out of this never-ending labyrinth of birth, disease and death, when we are almost choked, as it were, by the tumultuous waves of this restless sea, then and then alone falls upon our ears the gentle and reassuring voice of the Guru who, standing above the storm-tossed waves, beckons us to follow him, and we instinctively obey. In his infinite mercy he teaches us the Truth that has been dinned into the ears of humanity for ages upon ages, the Truth that Brahman alone is real, that the universe considered apart from Brahman is a mere chimera, and that we are that Brahman, self-contained, infinite, eternal,—before which the spectre of Duality crouches in fear, and in whose serene effulgence the darkness of ignorance vanishes into nought.

ऐतरात्मविदं सर्वं तत् सत्यं स आत्मा न च वसि अनेकतो—
—“All this is of the essence of that subtle Principle, which is Truth, which is the Atman (Self), and thou art That, O Sweta-Ketu”—thus does the perfect Teacher rouse us from our self-forgetfulness, from our long sleep with its attendant uncanny dreams. If we are ready, if our attachment for this putrid corpse of the world has been sufficiently attenuated, then at a flash the Truth illuminates our hearts, and enthrones itself there in all its majesty, never to depart. We are lifted, out of the reach of the waves of Time, Space and Causation, into a region where there is eternal Peace, and undying Bliss. This is called Realisation or *Jñānam*.

But if we are not so far advanced as

that, if behind our apparent dispassion for the world there still lurks the desire for its insidious joys, if we, in spite of our sincere desire to get out of the meshes of the world, have yet a secret hankering for sense-pleasures, then the Guru recommends the other path—that of Upāsanā. The word has no exact equivalent in English, but it may be roughly rendered as ‘mental worship.’ This was the meaning the word had in the Upaniṣadic times—Bhāvanā or systematic thinking. This instrument, then, is put into the hands of the disciple to prepare himself for the revelation of the highest Truth—Unity. By its means the aspirant is unconsciously carried to higher and higher spiritual altitudes, and finally, if he is patient and persevering enough, he comes to that dizzy height where all differentiation of thought is merged in the Oneness of the Vision Beatific. Just as, in the case of a man of weak lungs, it may be injurious to life itself to ascend suddenly to a rarefied atmosphere, so, to the ordinary aspirant an attempt to take a sudden leap into the region of the Advaita may be disastrous. His very nerves accustomed to altogether different thought-impulses, will refuse to obey the summons. But by degrees these as well as the mind may be so trained and purified, as to freely breathe in the sublime atmosphere of the Absolute. And Upāsanā is the vehicle through which he can achieve this end.

How is this effected, it may be asked. The answer has been partly suggested above. If our present limited existence has been the outcome of persistent thinking, then, just by reversing the process we can cut through our limitations and regain our real nature, which has merely been clouded, but not lost. This

marching back, this reversing process of thought must be very intense to bear quick results, for it must be potent enough to counteract the baneful influence of ages of vitiated, poisonous thought. But it is possible, nevertheless,—for one lie may require twenty other lies to keep it alive, but Truth is paramount in power; it is self-evident. The aspirant, as the Vedanta repeatedly points out, has not to acquire any extraneous thing—which might cause great delay and obstruction—but has simply to know what he has always been. If only the desire to know the true nature of the Self is genuine, the path is already clear.

So, for the great majority of human beings who seek a deliverance from this relative existence, Upāsanā is the safest and surest way to Realisation. Upāsanā concretised is external worship—the worship of the immanent Divinity through images or symbols. The sages of India knew its secret long ago, and for people of the most ordinary calibre they have prescribed external worship as a means to the highest goal. Anyone who has taken the pains to understand the meaning—plain, not esoteric—of the Mantrams with which the worship through images or symbols is carried out, has known that the worship is made not—as is too often erroneously supposed by people of uninformed circles—to the material emblem wherein the Divine Presence is conceived, but to the Divinity Itself. Worship *minus* this meditation is nothing. So from the lowest strata right up to the point beyond which there is no duality, Upāsanā, in one form or the other, holds sway. It may be negative, as Neti, Neti, “not this, not this”—eliminating limited adjuncts till at last the mind is absorbed into its inmost being or reality; or it may be the

meditation on comparatively limited aspects of the Reality,—the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, such as that He is possessed of all forms, all attributes—in short, conceiving the Reality in more or less personal aspects. But by degrees, as the mind is strengthened and purified, the thin barrier between the highest Personal Aspects and the Absolute Impersonal Aspect is transcended, and the seeker loses his hitherto-assumed limited individuality in the Reality—that-is. It is no lifeless, inert state, as it is feared, but it is the Essence out of which what we call life and intelligence are projected. It cannot be put in terms of thought and language, being Absolute; hence people are apt to confound It with a senseless existence.

It will be clear to all that even our daily acts can be converted into worship. Whatever work we do, the motive behind it will tell us whether it is an act of worship or not. If it is done to get beyond the ugly limitations of our present life, to that

region of Eternal Bliss, then surely it is worship—an approach towards Godhead, towards our real Nature. All disinterested works are *ipso facto* acts of worship. Selfless work and meditation are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. The one concerns itself with the Supreme Being, the Sachchidânanda, as *inside* us, and in the other case this universe is considered as His veritable form. Worship Him one way or the other, just as you like. If your worship is sincere and conducted in the right way, if you are pure and patient, you are bound to see the Light. Worship will culminate in Realisation, Upâsanâ in Jnânam, and you will then see, with an inspired eye, that the universe with its wonderful diversity, and all beings, of whatever grade, are Brahman Itself. There is no duality anywhere, only there is the One without a second, and you are That !

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA.

KEDAR NATH AND BADRI NARAYAN.

(An Unpublished Writing by the Sister Nivedita.)

(Concluded from page 201.)

WITH Buddhism we come to the bed-rock of Himalayan religion. There is only a trace here and there. Most of the evidence is built upon inference. One or two of these Chaitya-like buildings, and here and there the head of the Bodhisattva, are all the direct testimony that I have been able to find, yet it seems probable that the first religious organisation of the Himalayas was the work of Buddhism, that all subsequent movements poured their influence in upon the spots which that first enthusiasm

had created, and that therefore all the most ancient sites in the Himawant derive their authority and sanctity from the Buddhist orders.

Conspicuous amongst such are those village-squares which are really the temple-close made into Bazar and inn. To this type belong Agastya-muni, Gupta Kashi, Gouri Kund, Akhi Math, Gopeswar, Joshi Math, the court of Kamaleswar in Srinagar, and more obscurely Kedar Nath itself. This is the kind of inn-yard that saw in England the

development of the drama. How full of interest it is! One arrives in the village with all one's baggage, and beasts of burden, and servants, to spend a few hours, and be off, mayhap, before dawn the following morning. One is accorded a place of bivouac in one of the great verandahs that look down upon the court, and at once one becomes part and parcel of the village life. At the far end, yonder is the door that leads into the temple-cloister itself, if indeed it does not happen that the shrine is reared in the very midst of the scene before us. Coming and going, going and coming, are Brahmins and friars, merchants and travellers, and simple pilgrims. Here we watch some grave ceremony of incantation, there again we see a family at their midday meal. Beneath us a moment later is raised the cry of 'thief' and the patriarchal Brahmin appears, to lead away into the more decent seclusion of the temple-precincts an excited woman, her embarrassed husband and the remonstrating youth who stands charged with the villainy. How easy and delightful it would be to fill the court at nightfall with a crowd of villagers for a magic-lantern lecture or a Mahabharata Kathakata! A party of Bengalee students did something of the sort a few years ago, headed by the monk Sadananda, and the auditors came, I heard, from twelve and fifteen miles to enjoy the treat.

The pre-historic elements of Hinduism are not missing from even this cursory glimpse of the Himalayas. There has been a definite Mahabharata period when the whole culture-energy of the region seems to have been devoted to dramatising and appropriating the heroes and incidents of the great Epic. There is a little river called Vyasa Ganga, upon whose bank stands a tiny chapel containing an image of Vyasa! And beyond its boundary lie practically all the associations of the five Pandavas, ending in the great snowy road of the Mahaprasthana at Kedar Nath itself. Could evidence have been

clearer that there was once an attempt, definite, deliberate, and literary, to impose the ideas of the national epic on an Himalayan kingdom, of which perhaps this particular river was the frontier, and to parcel it out into a sort of Mahabharata holy land? At Kathgodam, the Pandavas are said to have begun their last pilgrimage, and their road leads us past Bhim Tal or the lake of Bhima, and past Dhari, their treasury, while the ice-scratches on the rock at Devi Dhura are said to mark the places of their packis-i* board! The caves on the road to Kedar Nath are assigned each to one of the princes, to Draupadi or to the dog. There are way-side shrines dedicated to them. One of the great Prayags is sacred to the name of Karna. But amongst all these, the one name that impresses one as genuinely pre-Mahabharatan, that is, as non-literary, and savouring of the soil itself, is that of the Hindu Herakles, Bhima, or, as the people call him, Bhimasena. When we come to the village of Agastya-muni, indeed, and learn that the tale of the sage who drank up the ocean is also told of the Vale of Kashmere, which is merely a larger edition of this little valley of Agastya-muni, we can see for ourselves that the story is a pretty geological myth of a ravine that was once a lake. And we feel again a thrill of wonder at the encyclopaedic character of the information that went to make up the great poem. But the fact that the geography of distant Himalayan valleys receives notice shows in fact that the culture-level of this neighbourhood was then such as to contribute scholars to the board of composition. Thus we come back to the integral and important part which Himawant must have played in Indian thought ever since the Asokan organisation of the propaganda. From the facts of literary history it would appear probable that the Mahabharata period between Vyasa Ganga and Kathgodam must

*An Indian play like dice.

have coincided with the completion of the poem about the middle of the Gupta era. The eagerness of the great dynasty and therefore, by inference, of all friendly and allied states to publish the mighty work and their idea that it contributed a kind of educational scheme, is evident enough in many other directions. Hence we cannot be surprised at the energy with which it seems to have been taken up here, nor at the appeal that has been made to the pride of the people and to their love for their beautiful country, in giving them, as it were, a local claim upon it all.

The systematic way in which this was attempted becomes particularly incontestable when we come upon such traces as the shrine and image of Sringi at Agastyamuni. At Srinagar again, there is a temple of the Five Pandavas. And every here and there we come upon some Muni or other, as for instance Kapila Muni. One can imagine the miracle-plays of the Mahabharata that must

have taken place from time to time in these temple courts, half theatre, half college, like the rude dramas still seen in the villages of Maharashtra! And what about the Rama-yana? Was it an earlier, or a rival scheme to that of the Mahabharata? Close to Hirshikesh, in Lakshman Jhula begins its terminology, which comes to a head at Devaprayag, in the temple of Ramachandra. Here we realise what a large and compelling synthesis was offered by early Vaishnavism, for just as we cannot fail to understand that Ganesh has been gathered into the Saivite scheme from older pre-historic sources, so here we find Hanuman behind and Garud in front of the temple as guardians, and know suddenly that vast antiquity which these two represent. It must always be a feature of dominant religions that when fully formed they incorporate the debris of preceding systems. Garud is a strangely persistent element of Himalayan religion. He crops up occasionally even on the road to Kedar Nath itself.

THE PROBLEM OF WOMEN IN INDIA

HIS month the whole of India is in high spirits. Festivities are observed throughout the length and breadth of the land in one form or other in honour of the Divine Mother. She is worshipped everywhere, though probably Bengal takes the greatest part in these festivities. Customs and doctrines bearing on this worship vary in different parts of the country. In Bengal She shines forth as the woman perfect in beauty and purity, and even as the symbol of the Motherland. But of all the aspects the devotee would like to see Her only as the young wedded daughter returning for a few days' visit to her father's house from the snow-clad Himalayas rising in peaks above peaks over Nature's own park where the earth, plants, trees, snows and everything else express the glory of the Lord—a fit place for the Lord of the universe, Shiva, to reside with His spouse, the Divine Parvati.

The Hindu knows that the Divine Mother is no other than the *Para Prakriti* or the Divine Energy of the Supreme Being. Out of Her is born everything of the universe and hence She is the Mother of the universe. She is all-powerful, for the various forces of Nature are but the manifestation of Herself. Wherever there is any force working, it is the Divine Mother Herself. वा देवी तर्जुमतु यस्मि-हयै संसिता—“She is the Goddess who resides in all beings as Power.” But the idea most appealing to the Hindu about the Mother Divine is वा भीः स्वयं श्रुतिनां भवते, चलनीः पापालनां । देवा यस्मा वरा तुयां भवते तुलये—“She is the Goddess of fortune Herself in the families of the meritorious, and the Goddess of ill luck in those of the sinful.” “She alone being satisfied is there hope of salvation for mankind.”

If this is true, why so much misery, scarcity and disease in this country where She is worshipped by

Innumerable devotees? Is she not pleased with them? Evidently not, for the cause is known from the effect. What then is the reason? The Divine Mother cannot be hoodwinked by idle talks. She adjudges gifts according to the intrinsic merits of all actions. She is fully aware of the hypocrisy we practise. With folded hands and head bent low we say, "O Mother Divine Thou art beyond the reach of our praises: Thou pervadest every particle of the universe; all knowledge proceeds from Thee, O Infinite source of wisdom! Thou dwellest in every feminine form and all women are Thy living representatives on earth." But do we really act up to this? What have we done to better the condition of our women? Have we carried on the worship of the Divine Mother by trying to educate and accord the proper honour to them, Her representatives living in every home?

The Mother smiles her loving blessings on the nations of the West because of their worship of the Sakti, though not in Her highest aspects. It is this that has brought prosperity to the West. As Swami Vivekananda says, "Without Sakti (Power) there is no regeneration for the world. Why is it that our country is the weakest and the most backward of all countries?—Because Sakti is held in dishonour here. Once more will Gargis and Maitreyis be born in the country. Without the grace of Sakti nothing is to be accomplished. What do I find in America and Europe?—the worship of Sakti, the worship of Power. Yet they worship Her ignorantly through sense-gratification. Imagine, then what a lot of good they will achieve who will worship Her with all purity, in a Sattvika spirit, looking upon Her as their mother!" Truly does Manu say, that Gods bless those families where women are happy and well-treated. There is no chance for the welfare of the country unless the condition of the women is improved and true womanhood honoured. That is why Sri Ramakrishna accepted a woman as his Guru and preached the Motherhood of women, the living forms of the Divine Mother. Unless the women become worthy to continue the traditions of Sita, Savitri, Ahalya Bai, Meera Bai, they cannot bring forth heroes—heroes who will once more raise Mother India to the forefront of the civilised world.

How can the condition of the women be bet-

tered? What are the problems that confront them most at present? There are many and grave problems. But liberty is the first condition of growth. "Liberty of thought and action is the only condition of life, of growth and well-being." Where it does not exist the country must go down. It is wrong therefore for anyone to say, "I will work out the salvation of the women." Who is man to assume that he can accomplish everything? The women are to solve their own problems and man's right of interference is limited entirely to giving them a healthy education. They must be educated and put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. None else can do this for them. There is no difficulty that will not vanish before education. Women are not less intelligent, less intellectual than men, only they have not been given opportunities. If they are given opportunities they will glorify our country. The country can again become great only by properly educating the young girls and the women of the country. They will be the mothers of the future generation, the heart and soul of the Indian Nation. Hence they have more right than boys for education. Unless the mothers are great the children will not inherit the qualities which are great and inspiring. Even in the hoary Vedic period there were well-educated women and Brahmanavadinis. Manu also says, "The daughter too should be thus brought up and educated with the utmost care." The early marriage of girls should be stopped if they are to be educated. They too will have to live the life of Brahmacharya like boys.

What is the education that is to be imparted to them? Once Swami Vivekananda said, "I should very much like our women to have the intellectuality of the Western women but not if it must be at the cost of purity. Intellectuality is not the highest good. Morality and spirituality are the things for which we strive. Our women may not be so learned but they are more pure." "Have our ancient women been a source of shame to us that we should lose their grace, sweetness, purity and child-like simplicity in exchange for intellectuality? It is much better that our women are in ignorance and fail to acquire intellectuality than lose these essential qualities." An education which uproots the training of character is ne-

education at all. All education must build character and strength of mind in the first place, and the expansion of the intellect is a secondary thing. We are therefore to have a clear idea of the goal towards which we are to work and India is not poor in ideals. We have Sita, a unique figure in the literatures of the world, a type of true Indian womanhood, "for all the Indian ideals of perfected woman have grown out of that one life of Sita who is purity itself, all patience, all suffering, the ever chaste wife." Any attempt to modernise our women apart from this ideal will be a failure. To quote a few more cases, we have the heroic Padmini, the saintly Meera Bai, the maiden Uma. There was no place in life that they did not fill graciously. What is it that appeals to us most in these women? It is their character. An education which does not exalt these ideal characters cannot be called true education. A thoroughly Westernised woman who does not represent the ideal of womanhood cannot be called truly educated. A woman who is modernised according to the necessity of the age but yet holds to the ancient ideals of faithfulness and devotedness, purity, tenderness and simplicity, should be the ideal woman of the age.

Schools must be started all over the country even in every village, and school-life must be made as essential a feature of girls' lives as of boys. Ideals held out at home the school will have to support and vice versa. The two, the school and the home, should not be antagonistic as is now the case in many of the schools for girls started by Christian societies for example. A training in the various works of the home, house-keeping, some elementary lessons in science, geography and history, sanitation, hygiene, and a knowledge of plants and animals, of the family environment and over and above all, child-rearing. This last would save the country from child mortality. A spirit of service and nursing, strength and self-reliance must be infused in them. At present our women are trained in helplessness and dependence on others. Circumstances have changed and it has become necessary for them to learn to depend on themselves in cases of emergency. The mother's heart, in the coming age, must be combined with the hero's will.

Though the pioneer work in the education of

women has to be done by men, yet in course of time women will have to take it up and continue it, for women know their needs better than men. In the West women teachers are often in charge of the education of children and there is no reason why a similar course should not be followed in India. Studying therefore the present conditions it is necessary that some women must be trained up in the ideals of renunciation. "They will have no idea of home save in their work, no ties save of religion, no love but for people and motherland." Such great characters alone can overcome all the difficulties present in the initial work of raising the women. Why should not women have an equal share in all the thought of the age? Is it impossible for any woman by the mere strength of character and intellect to realise the highest ideals? Some people however think that this exaltation of Brahmacharya would take the highest place from the mother and wife and thus indirectly be a blow at true womanhood. But they forget that the ideal of the Hindu is only one—the realisation of the Self; and this ideal has to be reached, be it through marriage or no marriage. There is no sex in the Atman. The greater the individual, the more will he or she transcend the limitations of sex, and such a thing has to be admired rather than deprecated.

Another great problem that confronts the Indian women is as regards the extent of their rights in the civic life of the Nation. In the West many women have long fixed the civic ideal as their goal. Under such an ideal both men and women are individuals having relation with one another. So according to it, family is only an accidental result of the co-operation of men and women by their own free choice. In India also in the ancient days women often distinguished themselves in the government of their country—a fact which goes to show that women in the East are also capable of contributing towards the growth of the civic ideal. Yet the civic ideal has never been the goal in the East, and the family has as a rule ever been the sphere of activities of the woman. Any development with regard to womanhood must be only a refashioning of old ideals to suit the present day conditions which have changed considerably. The path that she is to select should be one which will hold her faithful to the old ideal but at the same

time would remove much of the unnecessary and vexatious curtailing of her rights.

A word as regards woman's economic problem. As the family is her main career, here she is always in a position of dependence. No doubt the Hindu and Muhammedan laws make ample provisions for her, yet these are by no means adequate. Education of course would solve this problem to some extent. With education women will be able to strike out new paths for their maintenance where necessary. Already there are women following the professions of doctors, teachers and other avocations. But yet it will not solve the problem in all cases. Some more

provisions seem to be indispensable. Formerly helpless women were able to maintain themselves, and all this by their individual earnings, either by the spinning wheel or some other art or industry. Our women have practically given up all these and as a result they have become more dependent than ever on men. The re-establishment of cottage arts and industries would not only save our women from economic difficulties, but these would also indirectly solve the economic problem of the country to a great extent.

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

CLXXXIX.

(Written to Sj. Sarat Chandra Chakravarti, B. A.)

ओं नमो भगवते रामहृष्णाय !

शुभमेस्तु ! ज्ञायीर्वादप्रेमाक्षिङ्गनपूर्वकमिदं
भवतु तव प्रीतये । पाश्चभौतिकं मे पित्ररमधुना
किञ्चित् सुखतरम् । अचलगुरोर्दैमनिमयिडतणि-
काराणि पुनरुज्जीवयन्ति भृतग्रायानपि जनानिति
मन्ये । अमवाधापि कथञ्चित् दूरीभूतेत्यनुभवामि ।
यसे हृदयोद्देशकरं सुमुकुरुत्वं लिपिभङ्गशा व्यञ्जितं,
तन्मया अनुभूतं पूर्वम् । तदेव याभ्यते ब्रह्मणि
मनः समाधातुं प्रसरति । “नाम्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽ-
क्षनाय ।” उद्देश्यं सा भावना अधिकारिकं
यावद्वाधिगत एकान्तस्थः कृताकृतानाम् । तदनु-
सहस्रे ब्रह्मप्रकायः सह समस्तविषयप्रध्वंसेन ।
आगमिनी सा जीवमुक्तिस्तवं हिताय तथानु-
रागदाढ्येयौवानुमेया । याचे पुनस्तं लोकगुहं महा-
समन्वयाचार्यं श्री १०८ रामहृषणं आविर्भवितुम्
तव हृदयोद्देशे येन वै कृतकृतार्थस्त्वं आविष्कृत-
महायौर्यः लोकावृत्तम् महामोहसागरात्
सम्यक् वर्तिष्यसे । भव चिराभिष्ठित ओजसि ।

वीराणमेव करतबगता मुक्तिः, न कापुरुषाण्याम् ।
हे वीरा, बद्धपरिकरा भवतः; सम्मुखे यत्रवः
महामोहस्तपाः । “भ्रेयासि वदुविग्नानि” इति
निभितेष्यि, समधिकतरं कुरुत यत्तम् । पश्यत
इमान् लोकान् मोहप्राहमस्ताद् । श्रुतुत इहो
तेषां हृदयभेदकरं कारुण्यपूर्णं योकनादम् । अप्रगा
भवत, अप्रगा, हे वीरा, मोचयितुं पाणं वदानां,
श्वरयितुं क्षेत्रभारं दीनानां; घोतयितुं हृदयान्ध-
कूपं अक्षानाम् । अभीरभीरिति घोषयति वेदान्त-
दिविडमः । भूयात् स भेदाय हृदयप्रन्थः सर्वेषां
उगच्छिवासिनामिति ।

तवैकान्तशुभमादुकः विवेकानन्दः ।

TRANSLATION

Darjeeling.
19th March, 1897.

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna!

May you prosper ! May this letter conveying
blessings and cordial embrace make you
happy ! Now-a-days this fleshy tabernacle of

mine is comparatively well. Messeems; the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas, the Chief among Mountains, bring even the moribund back to life. And the fatigue of the journey also seems to have somewhat abated. I have already felt the yearning for Freedom—potent enough to put the heart into turmoil—which your letter suggests you are experiencing. It is this yearning that gradually brings on a concentration of the mind on the Eternal Brahman. "There is no other way to go by." May this desire blaze up more and more in you, until all your past Karma and future tendencies are absolutely annihilated. Close upon the heels of that will follow, all on a sudden, the manifestation of Brahman, and with it the destruction of all craving for the sense-world. That this freedom-in-life is approaching for your welfare, is easily to be inferred from the strength of your fervour. Now I pray to that World-teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, the Preacher of the gospel of Universal Synthesis, to manifest himself in the region of your heart,

so that, having attained the consummation of your desires, you may with an undaunted heart try your best to deliver others from this dreadful ocean of infatuation. May you be ever possessed of valour! It is the hero, alone, not the coward, who has Liberation within his easy reach. Gird up your loins, ye heroes, for before you are your enemies—the dire army of Infatuation. It is undoubtedly true that "all great achievements are fraught with numerous impediments;" still you should exert your utmost for your end. Behold, how men are already in the jaws of the shark of Infatuation! Oh, listen to their piteous heart-rending wails! Advance! Forward! O ye brave souls, to set free those that are in fetters, to lessen the burden of woe of the miserable, and to illumine the abysmal darkness of ignorant hearts! Look, how the Vedanta proclaims by beat of drums, "Be fearless!" May that solemn sound remove the heart's knot of all denizens of the earth!

Ever your well-wisher,

Vivekananda.

THE VILLAGE GODS OF SOUTH INDIA.*

THIS is an interesting book dealing with the worship of various deities, both male and female,—by the simple yet sincere and devotional country folk of South India. It not only gives the names of these deities but also a detailed account of the rituals and ceremonials connected with their worship, including the sacrifice of buffaloes, sheep etc. The author has taken great pains to study closely all these ceremonials and how they vary in different localities and with different deities. He has tried to throw a flood of light on these ceremonials in his own way and must be congratulated on his im-

partial view of the whole matter so far as the descriptive portion of the cults is concerned. As regards his remarks and theories we are not able to be at one with him.

There is one peculiarity in the religion of the Hindus, which the author seems to deny on page 139.—that it has never been separate from philosophy. It has room for all phases of religious thought and all systems of philosophy. From the highest flights of Vedanta down to the crudest form of ceremonial and ritualistic worship, worship of symbols and images, or any other forms which the human mind can ever conceive of—all these have a place in Hinduism. Even the agnostic and the atheist, Hinduism is broad enough to accommodate. The Hindu alone recognises the necessity for different phases of religious expression for people in different stages of evolution.

* New Edition, revised and enlarged, by the Bishop of Madras. The Religious Life of India Series. Published by the Association Press, 5 Russel Street, Calcutta. Pp. 175. Price Cloth Rs. 3, Paper Rs. 2.

Everyone will have to choose for himself his own religious ideal, for without that the spirit of religion is lost. The greatness of Hinduism lies in this. The Hindus know that there is infinite power of development in everything and so they never attempt at destruction. Construction is their watch-word. The Indian sages knew how society and individuals should grow. Man travels from lesser truth to higher truth, never from error to truth. Knowing these the sages laid down the general plan to guide the society and individuals upwards step by step. They never denounced. Step by step everyone must be led from the lowest truth to higher ones till the Oneness that exists throughout the universe is realised.

'It is for this reason that very few can correctly read the religion of the Hindus, and much less indicate what it teaches. When a foreigner comes to India and looks about he finds the worship of some great sage or of some symbolic representation like Siva, Vishnu, Kali or Durga, and this he cannot understand as he finds it difficult to enter into the spirit of the worship. The result is that he comes to the conclusion that the Hindu religion is false, or at best—like our author who professes to be exceedingly kind and impartial—he credits it with some amount of sincerity, yet it is after all a groping in the dark and the only solution for the forsaken heathen souls would be a wholesale evangelisation, as if it were a possible and easy affair.

One peculiarity which the author points out is that the majority of these village deities are feminine. He attributes this to the fact that the South Indians were an agricultural race, where the agriculture was largely left to the women. Moreover, he says, the idea of fertility is connected with the female all the world over and therefore the deities are also feminine. But we are rather inclined to think otherwise. The Hindu has been worshipping God as Mother from prehistoric times. As long as we conceive God as an extra-cosmic Being separate from nature, so long He will appear as Father only. But when we begin to realise that He is immanent in nature, we would realise Him both as our Mother as well as Father, for the feminine principle is then inseparable from the masculine element and Nature is not passive

and powerless but is the expression of the Divine energy which is worshipped by the Hindus as the Mother Divine. Why Mother? For this energy is the source out of which the whole phenomenal world is projected in space, and by which it is also preserved after it comes into being. This energy expresses itself in two sets of opposite forces, the good and the bad. Sometimes these opposite forces are personified and worshipped as the Divine Mother and sometimes as Her attendants. Hence the worship of Mariamma and others—small-pox-amma, plague-amma as our author calls them, not understanding the full significance of the worship. The Hindu has ever paid to woman the greatest respect that can ever be given, for he regards her as the representative of the Divine Mother. The earthly mother is regarded as a deity. The idea of motherhood has become so much ingrained in the Hindu that every village or city has its own guardian mother who takes care of all the citizens and villagers as her own children.

The author cites a few examples of persons of bad character who are worshipped especially as their death was rather sudden or accidental. But the fact is that it is not worship but only a case of pacifying the evil-spirit. The Hindus have ever believed in the existence of spirits which the West, too, is gradually coming to believe. When a man suddenly dies he is snatched away from the midst of his enjoyments, family etc. before he is satiated, and the attachment still surviving after death, the spirit may hover over the objects to which he was attached before death. Now if a man happens to be a bad one, death will not help him to get over his evil propensities and so when in the spirit world, having all the more power than before, he may not give up troubling people as was his wont when in the body. The simple country folks just give something to this evil spirit to escape from his torments which they fear, not remembering that before God this spirit can do nothing, just as they would try to satisfy a wicked officer, not knowing of the justice and paternal care of an established government. These spirits are neither worshipped nor given the same reverence as the deities.

No doubt the sacrifice of animals, in a method rather cruel, may appear to be a great black mark

in the cults. But yet we cannot deny that the sacrifice symbolises some moral and spiritual truths. The victim represents the worshippers, and the sacrifice represents the offering of their own souls to God and the killing of all evil propensities of man at the altar of the goddess. Or why should not this be a method of vicarious atonement? The author is liberal enough to grant this to the Jews, probably because Christianity is much indebted to them, whereas he is not willing to allow the same to the South Indians evidently owing to his proselytising zeal.

Another great defect pointed out in these cults is that the worship is mere propitiatory and is wanting in such sentiments like love &c. In the case of the ignorant we admit that propitiation forms a major part of the worship. But if we just have a glance at the various religions, we feel that it is a common factor in all religions with the ordinary people. How many men do really want God in any religion? Man by nature is after sense-enjoyments and few can think of the Lord except when they are in difficulties. Truly does the Lord say in the Gita, "One perchance in thousands of men strives to attain Me." Again in another place He says, "Four kinds of men worship Me, O Arjuna!—the distressed, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for enjoyment and the wise." The majority in any religion fall under the first and third categories and only a handful come under the other two. The author, himself a clergyman, must be quite familiar with this psychology and we only wonder that he should have found fault with only the worship of the village deities in this matter.

Some occasional remarks regarding the degeneracy of Hinduism and the immorality attached to various cults is harped on by the author which he hopes to remove by evangelising. Granting that this is true, may we ask him what Christianity has done for the immorality and degeneracy in Christendom itself? We withhold in this connection from mentioning the incidents connected with the history of the Christian religion which form the foundations of the modern churchianity. By an irony of fate the followers of these churches come to tell us that churchianity has civilised the world, and brought peace on earth!

According to the author the following is the idea of God which the country folk of Southern India possess : "The village deity is nothing more than a petty local spirit, tyrannising over and protecting a small hamlet * * She inspires fear because of power to do grievous harm by inflicting diseases &c. * * So she does not draw out any feelings of wonder and admiration, still less of love and gratitude." Can Christianity give these people any better idea of God? What is the idea of God of the ordinary Christian monotheist of to-day? It is the same Jehovah of the Jews, Jehovah sitting on a throne somewhere in the Heavens, with hands and legs, with eyes red with anger, holding a rod ever ready to punish the wicked with eternal hell-fire. The relation of man to such a God is that of a slave to his master obeying all his commands for fear of punishment. This is the idea preached from many of the orthodox pulpits of Christendom to-day, a conception after all not very far from that of the South Indian village deities.

We are struck by the author's optimism to evangelise 80 p. c. (according to his own figures) of the South Indian population. But we on the other hand cannot help being pessimistic and at best can think that the evangelizing zeal may at the utmost add to Mariamma already existing, another Maryamma (Virgin Mary) and Kuttandevvar may have an younger brother Christ-andevar, for the Hindus have always been broad-minded enough to worship purity, chastity, renunciation, self-control, and love to all, wherever and in whomsoever these are found.

Religion must be studied from a broader standpoint than heretofore. All narrowness and bigotry must be effaced from this earth, for religion must keep pace with the broad outlook that nations are having in other matters like politics, science &c. In future, religions have to become as universal as wide if they are to be accepted by people. They must embrace all that exists in the world and is good and great and at the same time have infinite scope for future development. Religions must also be inclusive and not look down with contempt upon one another because their particular ideas of God are different or forms and rituals vary. When religions become thus broadened, their

power for doing good will increase a hundred-fold. Religions having great power have often done more harm than good to the world owing to their narrowness and limitations. There must be a fellow-feeling between different types of religion,

and this can result only from mutual esteem and reverence. All religions express the same Truth and only differ in forms, for Unity is behind them all.

S. V.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 211.)

**सर्वे हि नः पृच्छतां ब्रह्मन्नात्मन्यानन्दकारण्यम् ।
शूद्धि स्पर्शविहीनस्य भवतः केषबात्मनः ॥३०॥**

30. O Brahmin, do tell us who ask you, how you derive bliss in your Self alone, untouched by sense-objects, and living a solitary life.

[Please tell me the secret of your strength.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

**यदुनैवं महाभागो ब्रह्मणेण सुमेधसा ।
पृष्ठः सभाजितः प्राह प्रथयावनं द्विजः ॥३१॥**

The Lord said :

31. Being thus asked and honoured by the intelligent Yadu who was devoted to Brahmans, the noble Brâhmaṇa addressed the king who had bent himself low in reverence :

ब्राह्मण उवाच ।

**सन्ति मे गुरुवो राजन् वहवो तुद्युपाधिताः ।
यतो बुद्धिसुपादाय सुकोऽटामीह ताद शृणु ॥३२॥**

The Brahmin said :

32. I have many teachers, O king, whom I resorted to through the intellect,¹ receiving wisdom from whom I roam on earth at large. Listen who they are.

[¹Through the intellect—Not that they actually instructed me but I derived these lessons from their way of living.]

**पृथिवी वायुराकाशमापोऽग्निभन्द्रमा रघिः ।
कपोतोऽजगरः सिन्धुः पतञ्जो मधुकद्वजः ॥३३॥**

33. The earth, air, sky, water, fire, the moon, the sun, the pigeon, the python, the sea, the moth, the bee, the elephant ;

मधुद्वा हरिणो मीनः पिङ्गला कुररोऽर्भकः ।

कुमारी शरकृत सर्पे उर्णनामिः सुपेणकृत ॥३४॥

34. The honey-gatherer, the deer, the fish, the courtesan Pingalâ, the osprey, the child, the maiden, the arrow-maker, the snake, the spider, and a particular insect known as Bhramara-kita.¹

[¹Bhramara-kita—When it catches a cockroach, the latter through fright is almost metamorphosed into the likeness of this insect.]

एते मे गुरुवो राजेन्द्रनुर्दियतिराधिताः ।

रिक्षा वृत्तिरितेषामन्वयिक्षमिहात्मनः ॥३५॥

35. These, O king, are the twenty-four teachers whom I have resorted to ; from the characteristic traits of these I have gathered all my lessons.

यतो यदुनुशिक्षामि यथा वा नाहुपात्मज ।

तत् तथा पुरुषव्याघ्र निवोध कथयामि ते ॥३६॥

36. O grandson of Nahusha, I am going to relate to you which lesson I have learnt from whom, and how,—listen.

भूतंराकम्यमाणोऽपि धीरो द्वैववशानुगैः ।

तद्विद्वान् चलेन्मार्गादन्वयिक्षं क्षितेर्वतस् ॥३७॥

37. The man of steady intellect should not, even though oppressed¹ by creatures that are themselves under the sway of

destiny,² swerve from his path,³ being conversant with this fact ;—this is the trait I have learnt from the earth.

[¹ *Oppressed etc.*—The earth is called 'all-for-bearing.' So should the saint also be. Hills and trees also are cited in the next verse as forming part of the earth and giving their own lessons.

² *Destiny*—or God's dispensation.

³ *Path*—of sameness of vision.]

ग्रन्थत्परार्थसर्वेहः परार्थकान्तसंभवः ।
साधुः यिद्वेत् भूमृतो नगयिष्यः परात्मताम् ॥३८

38. The good man should learn from

the hill¹ how one should always direct one's entire actions to the good of others and one's very birth should be absolutely for the sake of others ; while, as a disciple of trees, he should learn how to be at the disposal² of others.

[¹ *The hill*—produces vegetation and streams etc., which contribute to others' good.

² *Disposal etc.*—Even if you hew it down, it won't murmur. Pelt at it, and it will give you luscious fruits. It calmly bears the ravages of the seasons, and so on.]

(To be continued).

REVIEWS.

The Future of the Indo-British Commonwealth. By Colonel Josiah C. Wedgwood, M. P., with a preface by Viscount Haldane. The Asian Library Series. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 251 + xvii. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 3-8.

This is the first of a series of books on Asian Culture including Religion, Philosophy, Literature, History and other subjects, which the Theosophical Publishing House intends to publish. In the present volume Colonel Wedgwood considers the possibility of a Commonwealth which would be not a Federation but a voluntary Union of the English-speaking peoples including the United States of America with India, the Dominions and other Imperial units etc., in which each would control entirely its own home affairs. In such a Commonwealth of which England herself would become the centre, the author says, there may be an education test which would wear out with the spread of education, but there would exist no colour or racial bar. While speaking of the Indian problem Colonel Wedgwood writes—"With all my confidence and pride in the incorruptibility of British political leaders, I say that India can provide men to be followed, not one whit inferior in either honesty or intellect."

According to the author there are three great obstacles to the Union by means of free Commonwealth—Ignorance, Selfishness and Insolence.

"Ignorance is vanishing ; so far as selfishness is nationally damaging, Self-government in Dominions cuts it out ; insolence too can only be ended in the same way. Free institutions in every intelligent part of the Commonwealth, and equal right for all throughout the Commonwealth ! By these, these only, can insolence, selfishness and ignorance be vanquished and a true Commonwealth established." But whether the obstacles can at all be removed and the establishment of complete equality between the white and non-white races would ever be possible is another question.

In the concluding chapter discussing the common basis of Union the author says that the basis might have been a common religious faith if men could have had enough belief in the altruism of the old Gospels. As this is not possible, "the only basis of Union that has not been tried yet, is democratic Union.....Union alone through democracy is not enough. Education in democracy is essential, as well as free run for democracy, safe from brute force. If the education is sufficiently widespread and sufficiently true, we may find the way from Union to true Brotherhood."

But we doubt if even this would suffice. True Brotherhood can be established only when man comes to realise the fundamental unity of mankind in the Spirit, the common substratum of all that exists, when man seeing the Unity equally

existent in all beings will give up national prejudices and racial animosities, cease to dominate and exploit others for the satisfaction of the greed of material power and wealth, and be ready to recognise that in working for others without any selfish motive or sense of personal gain he really works for his own Self and in loving others he but loves his real Self, for it is the Spirit that has assumed all the various forms; and before the realisation of the Unity all distinctions of colour, creed or race vanish away into nothingness.

On a complicated subject like the one treated in the book it is not possible for everybody to agree with all the opinions and estimations expressed by the author who sees things mainly from the standpoint of a member of the British Labour party, though his outlook of life is broader than that of ordinary men. But few would question, we think, that Colonel Wedgwood writes with a conviction that is sincere and an optimism which if it ever proves to be true would at least to some extent conduce to the peace and happiness of the world.

"Dry" America. By St. Nihal Singh. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 164 + xi. Bound in cloth. Price Rs. 3.

We are glad to receive with thanks a copy of the book through the courtesy of Mr. W. E. Johnson, the great American prohibitionist and heartily welcome the timely publication written with a view to enlighten the Indian people as to the means that America adopted to overcome the difficulties standing in the way of prohibition, so that India may profit by America's experience and example.

Mr. Nihal Singh gives an interesting narrative of the rise and victory of the movement in the

United States, describing with ample facts and figures how Mr. W. E. Johnson ("Pussyfoot") and other noble souls fought hard in the teeth of great opposition with considerable risk even to their lives, and at last won the cause. He speaks of the many blessings it has brought to the American nation—the banishment of liquor means that money instead of being wasted is being utilised with great profit for productive purposes, for the improvement of the economic, sanitary and moral condition of the American people.

"Cases of brawls, assaults and even more heinous forms of crime, and of insanity," writes the author, "are decreasing. Municipalities and states are saving money upon police court establishments, jails, "poor-houses" (work-houses), insane asylums, and other institutions. Sobriety is promoting domestic happiness and thrift, and increasing the value of property in the areas from which "saloon" (drink shop) has been evicted, and thereby is benefiting the state as well as the individual."

Owing to the prevalence of widespread poverty India at first may, unlike America, experience some difficulty in recouping the loss that may be entailed upon her by prohibition, but if the authorities take the trouble, it can no doubt be surmounted. The author very rightly concludes:—"Any temporary difficulty that may be experienced in making the necessary financial adjustments should not, in any case, be permitted to stand in the way of a reform which conforms to the religion and traditions of the people, and which demonstrably will confer incalculable benefits upon them."

The get-up of the book is good. We recommend it to our readers with the greatest pleasure.

NEWS AND NOTES.

The Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work, Khulna

The Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has sent us the following for publication:—

The Mission has already informed the public that besides cloth-distress and starvation, malaria has broken out in the affected area of Khulna. It

is a heart-breaking sight to see that men and women having no rags even to cover their loins cannot come out of their houses to receive rice. Most of our recipients are half-naked. The distress of cloth is growing very acute and will be more so unless the generous public lend their helping hands to their brothers and sisters. The

Mission has already sent 220 pairs of tents and some old cloth, but this is too insignificant a quantity to cope with the present condition of the people. Owing to the want of funds it has been unable to send more for their relief. It has sent two dozen bottles of Edward's Tonic and other medicines for the prevention of malaria, and distributed on the 31st August 85 maunds and 30 srs. of rice among 1728 recipients. As the area of the work is gradually extending the Mission ardently hopes that the public will never remain silent to its repeated appeals.

9th Sept., '21.

(Later)

The people of Paikgacha, Kaligaunge Thanas and several other neighbouring villages are so much afflicted with starvation that they do not feel any hesitation to subsist on wild plants suitable for animals only. It is impossible for us even to imagine the critical condition of the sufferers unless we see it with our own eyes. The Mission apprehends that during the coming winter those sufferers who have got a narrow escape from the present starvation will be quite unable to save themselves from the pinching cold owing to the want of clothes and become sure victims to death. A good many appeals are coming for opening new relief centres, but the Mission cannot comply with their piteous requests on account of the want of sufficient funds. Since 14th September it is distributing 113 maunds and 20 seers of rice among 2260 recipients at the rate of two seers per week without any distinction of age or sex and has recently sent 80 old cloths and shirts, to Nakipore. It thankfully acknowledges that during the last month Messrs. Butto Krishna Paul & Co. of Sova Bazar Street, Calcutta and the Banga Lakshmi Mills kindly contributed 18 bottles of Edward's Tonic free of cost and 220 pairs of new cloth at Mill price respectively. It is impossible for a single community to cope with the present distress of the people unless our generous sisters and brethren lend their helping hands to the same cause.

Contributions will be thankfully received at the following addresses:—(1) Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. (2) Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur, Howrah.

(Sd.) Saradananda.

26th Sept., '21.

Secretary, Rk. M.

Dr. Rabindra Nath on Education

In the course of his first speech on Education delivered in Calcutta Dr. Tagore said—"The one true path of attaining freedom in the external world is the knowledge and faith in these immutable laws which have now been made known to mankind. In order to attain this knowledge we shall have to accept the West as our teacher..... The immutable laws of the material world properly used lead to success but success itself is not the fulfilment of our humanity....With all its efficiency for producing material comforts and even benefits for mankind, the West has taken away at the same time much of that delight which comes to man from the realisation of the soul.....The best minds of the West are now busily employed in seeking for that missing truth which has been forgotten. In doing so, they have instinctively turned their heads towards the East.

"The East has its unshakable faith in the infinite living ideal, which gives meaning to all things and fulfilment to our humanity. The time has come for the West to come to the East. For the soul of the West is famished and her social life has been wounded to the quick. This is the point reached in world-history to-day. It is the problem of every country of the world to bring to pass the deeper reconciliation of East and West, so that humanity may become one."

In his second lecture the poet dwelt on the same theme and after speaking of the achievement of the West in the mastery of the world through the mastery of the laws of nature pointed out—"She has been too busy with the mechanical relationship and has tended to forget the spiritual.....A creative ideal, which gave a unity to the conception of life, was one given to the West two thousand years ago from the East and the West bowed her head and accepted the truth which was offered. By its help she built up her civilisation age after age. And the time has come again in her present disastrous ruin through war and desolation, when she has again turned instinctively her face towards the East for that missing ideal of a creative unity which shall harmonise her life afresh."

A better understanding between the East and the West, and the interchange and assimilation of each other's ideas are absolutely necessary for the

growth and welfare of both, but before that can be accomplished each must properly understand herself, regain her true soul and realise the mission of her life. And without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition no real assimilation is ever possible, for a healthy body alone can possess the vitality to draw its nourishment from what is best in the outside world. It is on this fact that Swami Vivekananda laid the greatest stress:—"The one point to note is that when we take anything from others we must mould it after our own way. We shall add to our stock what others have to teach but we must always be careful to keep intact what is essentially our own. We must mould it after our own fashion, always preserving in full our characteristic Nationality."

Each race has a national purpose of its own and, therefore, one should not merge one's individuality into another but should grow receiving noble and life-giving materials from all healthy quarters, maintaining in full one's individual characteristics. The East should learn science from the West but keep it subservient to the spiritual scheme of her life; and education can be national only when this ideal is kept in view. The West on the other hand has to accept the East as her teacher in matters spiritual. Higher ideals of life alone can save the West from her imminent danger. "The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst to-morrow, go to pieces to-morrow. Now is the time to work so that India's spiritual ideas may penetrate deep into the West." What Swami Vivekananda said more than two decades ago holds equally true or more so after the war.

Free relation of love can never exist between a master and a slave, neither between a beggar and his patron. Willing co-operation is possible among equals. And Swamiji also speaks of this when he suggests how the union between the East and the West may be brought about. "You go to England, but that is also in the garb of a beggar—praying for education. Why! Have you nothing to give them? An inestimable treasure you have, which you can give,—give them your religion, give them your philosophy! From time immemorial India has been the mine of precious ideas to human society; giving birth to high ideas herself, she has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world.....Give those invaluable gems in exchange

for what you receive from them. The Lord took me to their country to remove this opprobrium of the beggar that is attributed by them to us. It is not right to go to England for the purpose of begging only. To give and take is the law of nature...Any individual or class or nation that does not obey this law, never prospers in life. We also must follow that law. That is why I went to America....They have been for a long time giving you of what wealth they possess, and now is the time for you to share your priceless treasure with them. And you will see how their feelings of hatred will be quickly replaced by those of faith, devotion and reverence towards you, and how they will do good to your country even unmasked."

Dr. Rabindra Nath's achievement lies in the fact that he went to the West not as a beggar craving for boons but as a teacher who carried the spiritual message of India to peoples greatly in need of the light spiritual. ¶

Plea for Humanistic Economics

Dr. Radha Kamal Mookerji, Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology in the Lucknow University in his inaugural lecture in August last, discussed the need of a new school of economic thought and research. We abridge the following from the Associated Press report:—"Economics has hitherto ignored the economic organisations and values of Asia. In the East the settled habits of many a socialised stock, the strong endowment of communal instincts and sympathies, the tradition of mutual help and neighbourly offices which spring in the village commune, have developed into a rich constructive communalism in a deeply socialised and harmonised life and have given a distinct cast to its economic life and institution. We need not brush aside our old and essential communalism as primitive and rudimentary and repeat the worst mistakes the West committed in her first phase of industrial evolution in the last century. With our streams and waterfalls harnessed and with the co-ordinated use of oil and gas engines and small, inexpensive windmills we may not only witness a revival of cottage industries and of communal workshops in which a multitude of artisans will work for the account of an entire village or guild under its law and protection but also the system

of decentralisation, i. e. of autonomy and responsibility in the big industry as well. With the help of the important lessons from the communalistic experiments in the West, her recent ideals, and experiences of co-operative productions, Guild Socialism, Syndicalism and self-government in industry on the one hand, and the implied socialism and humanism and the variety and vitality of group life in China and India on the other, there may emerge a true world scheme of economics for the industrial reconstruction in both the East and the West, in which immature and advanced peoples will help one another in the exploitation and distribution of the world's material resources, and the moral resources both of the East and the West will be utilised in the new economic experiments for bringing peace and harmony to a discordant and distracted humanity."

Capitalistic industrialism has led to social disintegration and other manifold evils and has in spite of its uses proved to be a failure in advancing the real well-being of the society, and hence industrial reconstruction on a humanistic basis suited to the modern age has became the crying need both in the East as well as in the West.

Conscience Clause

The United Provinces Legislative Council, we are very glad to note, has given the lead to the country in demanding the introduction of the Conscience Clause in the Educational Code. In August last was moved the resolution recommending it to the Local Government that every institution aided in any form under the provisions of the Educational Code should comply with the following constitutions: (a) no one shall be required to attend any religious instruction or observance as a condition of his admission into or continuance in the institution unless, if he is a minor, his parents shall have sanctioned it in writing and (b) the time or times during which religious instruction is given or observance practised shall not be fixed without the previous approval of the Education Department or in such way that the pupil not remaining in attendance during the time of such instruction or observance is excluded directly or indirectly from the advantages of secular education given in the institution.

After a heated discussion the resolution was carried amidst acclamation.

The example of the U. P. Legislative Council should be followed by all other Councils in India and proper steps should be taken early to put a stop to compulsory religious instruction against the wishes of the pupils or their parents or guardians. In many Christian Missionary schools and Colleges compulsory Bible classes are held with the avowed object of fostering a particular religion at the expense of others. It was declared at the Church of Scotland Assembly in Edinburgh that Presbyterian work in India was seriously threatened by Government's introduction of a Conscience Clause in dealing with state-aided schools and colleges and this meant the ending of concordat between the state and Christian Missions in India regarding education which had prevailed with great benefit for 65 years. It was finally resolved to approach the Government claiming that the Churches should have two or three years' notice.

If any religious instruction is to be imparted in educational institutions it should be done first on the student's own religion and that by competent and truly religious men. No doubt there is much in any scripture that is noble and healthy from both spiritual and moral standpoints, but it also contains things that are positively objectionable to the follower of a different scripture. As such it is the height of indiscretion to force religious teachings on students without any distinction whatsoever; and this practice should be stopped whether it is carried on by a particular institution or university. The religious ideal of the day should be to make the student a true follower of his own religion and not to undermine his faith by an alien one. "Every man should follow his own religion. A Christian should follow Christianity, a Mahomedan should follow Mahomedanism. For the Hindu,—the ancient path, the path of the Aryan Rishis, is the best.... Every person must remain always strong and steadfast in his or her own faith but maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions." (Sri Ramakrishna)

Traffic in Liquor and Opium

It is a grim irony that temperance movements are necessary in India, where there exists an agelong

tradition of abstinence, and the Hindu, Mahomedan and Buddhist law-givers look upon the drink habit as one of the greatest sins. But in spite of the injunctions of the Scriptures things have come to such a pass that at present there are many in India who are addicted to the curse of drink. How the evil of drink is spreading in India can be gauged from the testimony of Mr. C. F. Andrews : 'When I first came out I wrote in one of my books, "I have never once seen in the streets an Indian drunkard!" Alas, I could not write this to-day. * * * Drink and drug habit has been steadily and insidiously increasing.'

Indians it is generally argued are very moderate in the habit of drinking, but it can not be gainsaid that the evil habit is steadily on the increase and unless immediately arrested it may assume huge proportions that would prove to be very disastrous to the Indian people. This is the reason why complete abstinence should be practised and total prohibition introduced without any further loss of time. Indian sentiment everywhere is strongly in favour of total abstinence and we hope the day is not far off when the sale of liquor will be completely stopped throughout the length and breadth of the country except of course for medicinal, industrial and sacramental purposes.

Social morality should be preserved at any cost and by no means should social evils be encouraged either directly or indirectly on the so-called prudential and financial considerations. Total prohibition will conduce both to the moral and material welfare of the country, as the case of America conclusively proves. And what America has done India can accomplish with greater ease for the problem here is decidedly much simpler. As Mr. W. E. Johnson ("Pussyfoot"), the great American temperance missionary, said in a recent lecture in India, the best way of stopping the drink evil was to close the liquor shops and abolish the necessity of picketing. By prohibiting drink, he said, America was free and happy and India by following America in this matter would be equally so.

The curse of opium also is no less dangerous than that of drink and it too should be combated immediately. It is bringing about the ruin of not only an ever-increasing number of Indians at home

and abroad but of the Chinese and others as well. But those who make money by exploiting human frailties do little think that they cannot harm others without doing harm to themselves !

Re-admission to Hinduism of the Forcibly Converted

The news of the forcible conversion of a number of Hindus, men and women, into Mahomedanism by the fanatical and misguided Moplas of Malabar and other tales of heart-rending oppression and ghastly crimes have been received by the Hindus of all classes with the greatest horror and indignation. Conversion against one's will and conscience is an inhuman atrocity and is devoid of any meaning from the true spiritual standpoint. We are pleased to learn that many of the leaders of the Hindu society are taking steps to admit the so-called converts back into the Hindu fold and a leading Nambudiri high priest in the affected area has declared in the Nambudiri Organ "Yoga-Kshemam" about his decision to take back into Hinduism the forcibly converted after the necessary purificatory ceremony. Such a step would be in full accordance with the past history of Hinduism, the precedents of many of the great Vaishnavite reformers of India and undoubtedly in keeping with the spirit of the Hindu Shastras. Some of the Mahomedan leaders, including both divines and laymen, have declared that, according to the recognised principles of the Shariat conversion by force is not permissible and produces no result.

The perverts by force are at heart as good Hindus as before and have by no means forfeited their birthright after being made to go through some forced forms and ceremonies.

It is a significant fact that the Hindus in all parts of the country are showing great solicitude in the matter of receiving back the forced converts and we earnestly hope that the doors of Hinduism would henceforth be freely opened to receive all who are willing to come within the fold of the Sanatana Dharma.

Swami Abhedananda in Singapore

On Saturday, the 24th September, Swami Abhedananda reached Singapore by the steamer Tanda, on his way home from America. Representatives of the various local Hindu communities and

deputations from Kuala Lumpur and Seremban waited at the wharf. On landing the Swami was garlanded by the respective deputations, after which he motored to the place arranged for his residence. In the evening he, accompanied by Swami Videhananda of the Kuala Lumpur Vivekananda Ashrama, was taken in a grand procession to the Subramaniam Temple, Tank-road, where an address of welcome was read to him. The Swami was conducted to a raised dais and was garlanded by the temple authorities. Rai Sahib Ishwar Das, who was in the chair, introduced the Swami in a few words. This was followed by the reading of a Sanskrit poem, specially composed in the Swami's honour.

An illuminated address printed on silk and executed artistically, welcoming the Swami to Singapore was read. It was enclosed in a beautiful and massive silver casket and presented to the Swami, who rose to reply amidst deafening applause. In thanking the people for the honour done to him the Swami said that he took that

honour not upon himself but in the name of the religion to which they were all proud to belong. There was a great need for Hindu teachers, he said, in the West where it has been established that the Vedanta doctrine alone satisfied the highest demand of logic and science. He referred to the Hindu law of Karma which explained that one's own thoughts and actions placed one in a position of misery or otherwise. It also held out the chance of retrieval in a future life. Wasn't it a grander ideal for humanity than that of an eternal hell? This was only one of the eternal truths discovered by the great seers of truth in the very morn of the world. He concluded by saying that more missionaries were wanted to make known to the world those eternal truths and he urged his audience to study their own religion more intuitively and impart their knowledge to others who came within their daily sphere of life. On the night of the 26th September the Swami delivered a lecture on Progressive Hinduism at the Victoria Theatre.—From the *Malay Tribune*.

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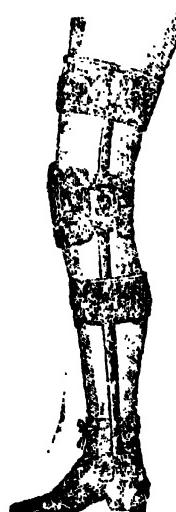
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Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

NOVEMBER 1921

[No. 304

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Q. Where should one meditate—inside the body or outside it? Should the mind be withdrawn inside or held outside?

A. We should try to meditate inside. As for the mind being here or there, it will take a long time before we reach the mental plane. Now our struggle is with the body. When one acquires a perfect steadiness in posture, then and then alone one begins to struggle with the mind. Ásana (posture) being conquered, one's limbs remain motionless, and one can sit as long as one pleases.

Q. Sometimes one gets tired with Japa (repetition of the Mantra); should one continue it or read some good book instead?

A. One gets tired with Japa for two reasons. Sometimes one's brain is fatigued, sometimes it is the result of idleness. If the former, then one should give up Japa for the time being, for persistence in Japa

at that time results in seeing hallucinations, or in lunaecy etc. But if the latter, the mind should be forced to continue Japa.

Q. Sometimes sitting at Japa one gets joy at first, but then one seems to be disinclined to continue the Japa owing to that joy. Should Japa be continued then?

A. Yes; that joy is a hindrance to spiritual practice, its name being Rasâswâdana ('tasting of sweetness'). One must rise above that.

Q. Is it good to practise Japa for a long time, though the mind may be wandering?

A. Yes. As some people break in a wild horse by always keeping his seat on his back.

Q. You have written in your Bhakti-Yoga that if a weak-bodied man tries to practise Yoga, a tremendous reaction comes. Then what to do?

A. What fear if you die in the attempt to realise the Self ! Man is not afraid to die for the sake of learning and many other things, and why should you fear to die for religion ?

Q. Can Jiva-seva (service to beings) alone give Mukti ?

A. Jiva-seva can give Mukti not directly but indirectly through the purification of the mind. But if you wish to do a thing properly, you must, for the time being, think that this is all-sufficient. The danger of any sect is want of zeal. There must be constancy (Nishthā), or there will be no growth. At present it has become necessary to lay stress on Karma.

Q. What should be our motive in work—compassion, or any other motive ?

A. Doing good to others out of compassion is good, but the Seva (service)

of all beings in the spirit of the Lord is better.

Q. What is the efficacy of prayers ?

A. By prayers one's subtle powers are easily roused, and if consciously done, all desires may be fulfilled ; but done unconsciously, one perhaps in ten is fulfilled. Such prayers, however, are selfish and should therefore be discarded.

Q. How to recognise God when He has assumed a human form ?

A. One who can alter the doom of people is the Lord. No Sadhu, however advanced, can claim this unique position. I do not see anyone who realises Rama-krishna as God. We sometimes feel it hazily, that is all. To realise him as God and yet to be attached to the world is inconsistent.

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DAPTABILITY is the law of life and the infinite capacity for adjustment to the inevitable changes of circumstances is the secret of the eternal life and the unfailing vitality of Hinduism, the popular name by which the Sanatana Dharma of the Indo-Aryans has come to be known in modern times. Even the immortal Vedas, the oldest of the world's Scriptures which record the early history of the religion of the Hindus, speak of a time when the fundamental principles and essential features of the great religion were highly developed; and though no doubt the form—the rituals and ceremonials, social laws and systems, and manners and customs of the Hindus underwent great changes with the flow of time, the spirit remains

the same up to the present day.

Hinduism presents a veritable ethnological museum. Whether we believe or not in the not infrequently contradictory theories of the ethnologists and their race criteria—the head form, the pigmentation of the skin and the structure of the body etc., or in their division of mankind into different races—the Negroid, the Mongolian, the Caucasian, and so on, we cannot but acknowledge after a little critical study that there exist within the fold of Hinduism various races and tribes, having social rules and customs, traditions and languages sometimes differing as widely from one another as those of

peoples inhabiting entirely different parts of the globe.

The so-called ancient Kolarian, Dravidian and Aryan races, and the hordes of invaders and immigrants—the Bactrians, the Sakas, the Huns and hosts of others who settled down in India before the advent of the Mohammedans, the tall and short types, the fair, the dark and the yellow-skinned, the long-nosed and the snub-nosed—all these are united by the bonds of a common religion, institution and literature. It is practically an impossible task to trace the ancestry and the history of the absorption of all these various groups of people into Hinduism. But how they all came within the pale of a common religion, often through the medium of Buddhism, although the Hindu religion is not aggressively proselytising, we learn from the fact that 'Brahmanism so far from being a non-missionary religion, in the sense of a religion that admitted of no *proselytes* was one which every year made more converts than were made by all the other religions of India put together,'—such is the testimony of Sir Alfred Lyall who wrote about the subject from direct knowledge and personal investigation. Again after a careful study of this problem, Sir George Cambell wrote to the same effect in the administrative report of Bengal for 1871—1872—that 'it was a great mistake to suppose that the Hindu religion admitted of no *proselytes*, for the system of caste found room for any number of outsiders.'

Hinduism in the past ungrudgingly opened its hospitable doors to all who were willing to become part and parcel of it, accepting its principles, ideas and institutions. And this process was going

on freely until the Mohammedan period, when Hinduism to protect itself from the militant religion of the followers of Mohammed, inculcated rigid social rules and regulations, though this changed attitude no doubt commenced even during the ascendancy of Buddhism in India. But in spite of this change of policy, even at the present times the peaceful penetration of Hinduism is going on in India and Ceylon notwithstanding the utter apathy of its followers. Besides the conversion of the Buddhists, the Jains and even the Mohammedans by the Hindu reformers, especially by those of the Vaishnavite sects are indisputable facts in the renaissance of the religion of the Hindus. And yet there are people who implicitly believe that Hinduism is not at all a proselytising religion! If the term implies any violent method as was often followed by the Mohammedans, and the Portuguese in India who boasted of making by the power of the sword more converts to Christianity within twelve months than all the missionaries could do in ten years, Hinduism does not certainly belong to this type, for it is and has ever been a *non-violent* missionary religion that has been peacefully spreading the potent influence of its culture, instilling into men its noble principles and bringing about their spiritual regeneration.

The leaders of the Hindu society never lost sight of the fact that true conversion is primarily a mental process, and a spiritual transformation. It is the shifting of the centre of one's faith and a remodelling of one's life after new ideals with the help of the light that is illuminated in the heart of the converted. Therefore conversion, brought about with the help of brute force or for the sake of

worldly advantages and considerations, in which the inner man undergoes no spiritual metamorphosis but remains at heart practically unchanged and sticks to the former faith and ideal of his life, is nothing but a mockery and is devoid of any meaning whatsoever on the very face of it. The mere performance of some rituals and ceremonials connected with any particular religion, without entering into its spirit, even when done quite willingly and without any compulsion by an external agent is undoubtedly meaningless from the true spiritual stand-point; but when it is forced upon any person by fanatics and he is made to undergo the physical process for fear of death or some other forms of detestable violence it becomes unquestionably utterly meaningless and as such it is against the true spirit and principle of any rational religion. Unless conformity to some prescribed or customary forms is followed by a change of heart which vitally influences the subject it is a mere physical affair and as it does not touch the soul of the man it has absolutely nothing to do with real conversion. But the pity of it is that people are led to believe that the mere muttering of certain words, the sprinkling of water or any other external process can accomplish true conversion ! Such is the thoughtlessness of man ! And even men of education speak of forcible conversion as being equivalent to giving up one's own religion and faith !

We now come to the momentous question that is at present disturbing the minds of all thoughtful Hindus—the re-admission of those Hindus who were forced to go through the ceremonies of the so-called conversions by some fanatical and deluded Moliammādins of Malabar. These despicable acts of violence have been un-

equivocally condemned by many of the Mohammedan leaders, divines as well as laymen, who hold that forcible conversions are against the injunction of the Koran which says, "Let there be no compulsion in religion," and the so-called converts who continue to be faithful to Hinduism are not Mussalmans from the stand-point of the Shariat. The poor victims of cruel fanaticism are in reality what they were before they had to go through some forced forms and ceremonies and the leaders of the Hindu society should devise means to take back all of them after the performance of purificatory ceremonies. Such a process would be quite in keeping with the past history and certainly in full conformity with the essential principles of the Hindu religion. Thus from the stand-point of reason and the spirit of the Hindu Scriptures the so-called converts who have not given up their religion are fully eligible to be restored to and remain within the fold of the religion of their birth,

In this connection naturally arises the question of admitting fresh adherents and taking back those who were perverted from the Hindu religion, as also their descendants, who are sincerely willing to come under the protection of the Hindu faith. Gathering converts under its banner is no new thing in the religious history of Hinduism as we have already seen. The time has come when the Hindus should be more loyal to the spirit of their religion than to the forms, for these are ever changing with the change of time and circumstances, as Hinduism never failed to rise equal to the occasion at all critical periods of its history. In the year 1899 Swami Vivekananda was asked in

an interview by a representative of the Prabuddha Bharata about the advisability of taking back into Hinduism those who have been perverted from it. "Certainly," said the Swami, "they can and ought to be taken.....The vast majority of Hindu perverts to Islam and Christianity are perverts by the sword or the descendants of these. It would be obviously unfair to subject these to disabilities of any kind. As to the case of born aliens, did you say? Why, born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds, and the process is still going on. * * *

"Ceremonies of expiation are no doubt suitable in the case of willing perverts, returning to the Mother Church, as it were, but on those who were alienated by conquest—as in Kashmir and Nepal,—or

on strangers wishing to join us, no penance should be imposed.

"Returning converts will gain their own castes, of course. And new people will make theirs. You will remember, that this has already been done in the case of Vaishnavism. Converts from different castes and aliens were all able to combine under one flag, and form a caste by themselves,--and a very respectable one too. From Ramanuja down to Chaitanya of Bengal, all great Vaishnavite Teachers have done the same."

We commend Swamiji's views to our Hindu brethren who are anxious to have the doors of Hinduism freely opened to all persons willing to come under the shelter and direct influence of the great Mother of religions.

LOVE—ITS SECRET.

AFTER the day's hard toil the weary labourer, ill-paid, ill-clad and ill-fed, wends his way home with a settled melancholy and despair on his face. But in the cool recess of his thatched cottage as his wife waits upon him with loving care and his children divert him with their gentle smiles and sweet prattles, he forgets toil, poverty, cares and anxieties. And for the time being a glow returns to his colourless cheeks. Day after day, night after night the anxious mother forgets her own identity and nurses her sick child, not knowing what is regular food and drink, sleep and rest. The patriot who sincerely loves his country considers it a rare privilege to serve her even at the sacrifice of all he values most. To defend his hearth and home he would,

if necessary, enter the thick of battle, fight and meet death with a smiling countenance. The philosopher, a devotee at the shrine of truth, happening to differ from his countrymen, falls a victim to their ignorant fanaticism. The inhuman tortures and persecutions, he is put to, he bears patiently and calmly. The saint sees the hand of Providence in everything good or evil, and cheerfully accepts the trials and tribulations as loving gifts from the Divine.

Now what is it that enlivens the worries and crosses that embitter life? It is love. Love makes a heaven of hell by shedding its divine charm all around. But for this divine elixir the *samsara*, as it is, would have been a veritable furnace burning and parching souls with torments and

afflictions. Love is the very life and soul of the world. It abounds everywhere. The limitless azure of the sky, the unending stretch of hills and dales, the sombre rush and dash of water-falls and streams, the vast expanse of the ocean and the sweet rustling of leaves reveal this love. It is present as chemical affinity in the atoms and as gravitation in the solar systems that revolve round one another. From the crawling insect to man, the crown of creation—all beings without exception have love within and manifest it by their activities. It is the tie of love that unites parents with children, husbands with wives and friends with friends. Thus family affection, patriotism, devotion to truth and faith in God are only different forms of love. This love, universal and all-pervading, that tinges everything with an unearthly hue, has its primal and perennial source in the Atman, the Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. Truly has it therefore been said in the *Sruti* :—“The son is loved not for the son’s sake, not for his material form, but for the Atman that lives in him. The husband is dear to his wife not because of his physical appearance, but for the Atman that lies behind his body. Wealth is sought after not because it has got an intrinsic value of its own, but for the Atman that is there.” Just as the thread runs through the flowers and makes the wreath a thing of beauty and joy, the Atman is at the basis of the cosmos and makes it what it is. In It we ‘live, move and have our being.’ “We are no aliens in a stranger universe, governed by an outside God; we are parts of a developing whole, all enfolded in an embracing and interpenetrating love.”*

But as our vision is blurred over by *Avidya* we miss this one, universal link, weave round our individual egos the webs of *samsara* and confine therein the boundless love which is our birthright. Even as a small pool of standing water with no living current begets obnoxious germs, love that is congested within limited areas becomes polluted, unhealthy and harmful. When carried to the worst extreme such love turns out to be a plague to humanity. Tyranny, murder, suicide, debauchery and such other detestable sins and crimes are its offspring. We see the play of this vitiated love in Nero, that infamous Roman emperor, whose pleasure was in riding rough-shod over the feelings of others. Once how merrily he fiddled on while Rome was burning and her populace were flying helplessly for life and rending asunder the sky with their piteous wails and moans ! This love again as insatiable lust once brought the ruin of two beautiful and rising empires—Lanka and Troy. But love becomes a Divine gift when it shines forth in all the glory of its sublime purity and selflessness. It then rings with the triumph song of a happier mankind. It becomes a delight, a blessing and a benediction. It ennobles and uplifts. Worldly loves are only faint shadows and imperfect imitations of this Love Divine. The history of the world is a living testimony to this undeniable truth.

At the lowest stage of spiritual growth a creature centres his love upon his body and evaluates the values of life by the amount of sense-pleasure it brings. He does not care for anything beyond; he has a gross materialistic outlook; his sole concern and aim is to clothe, feed and serve the body as best as he can. The pig eats his full and at the height of his joy wallows

* Sir Oliver Lodge.

in the mire; the savage-in-in tattoos his skin and dances in mad delight; the fashionable lady in her gayest finery, fully conscious of her culture and refinement, proudly looks at the mirror and swaggers about with a jaunty air. Although there is an evolution from grosser to finer forms all these are nothing but adorations of the body, the mass of bones and flesh. But as the vision unfolds and widens a creature comes to see that his own happiness is closely bound up with the family and the community of which he is a member. He therefore extends his love to those with whom he is surrounded and also gets theirs in return. Very few, indeed, love and expect no return. Leaving aside the mother's affection for her children, mostly there is an element of calculation and bargaining in our family affections. The same truth holds good as regards our communal love if it is not based on higher religious considerations. Thus worldly love is seldom disinterested. It is true that we sometimes meet with cases where love, though worldly, is sincere and intense. But as it is confined to physical forms it is not immune from sorrow and disappointment that follows separation and death of the beloved. Constantly deceived, embittered and disgusted a creature naturally craves for something permanent and substantial upon which he can rely. Here begins the search for the Beyond, the Real! Hence religion! Hence Love Divine! The story is told of Vilyamangal—how formerly he was a rake of the first water and afterwards a saint of a high order. It was his paramour, Chintamani, the cause of his ruin, that paved the way for his spiritual awakening. Chintamani was his life, his soul, his everything. For her he neglected, nay, almost forgot his near and dear ones, squandered his patri-

mony and lost all sense of shame. One day he was detained at home till late in the evening by the annual *shraaddha* ceremony of his father while there was raging outside a furious storm accompanied with thunder and lightning. Mad as he was for the company of his sweetheart, the frowns of the elements and the inclemencies of the weather meant nothing to him! He was not to be deterred from his campaign of love! Half unconscious he went out, swam across the big river that stood between, scaled the high walls of her house and appeared before her. So absorbed, so beside himself was he with the thoughts of Chintamani that he mistook a stinking carcass floating by for a log of wood and rested his body on it while crossing the river. The wonderful attachment of the man astonished Chintamani who reproved him saying, "Shame on you! Had you directed towards God the intense love that you have lavished on this short-lived filthy body of mine you would have got Bliss Eternal!" This timely reproach instinct with meaning cut the intoxicated lover to the quick and served as an eye-opener to him. His better senses returned. And his life changed altogether.

How rarely is Divine Love vouchsafed unto man! And when it comes, it comes like the onrush of a surging wave sweeping away everything that falls on its path. It drags to forests the son from the warm protection of loving parents, the husband from the sweet company of the beloved wife and the king from the high throne and royal luxury. Bonds of worldly affection fall off before it. Lust, gold and power lose their splendour on its advent. This Love Divine maddened Dhruva and impelled him to search in trackless forests for the Lord with lotus eyes. Again the

sweet notes of Sri Krishna's *murali* that ravished the pure, simple folk of Brindavan signify the imperative call of this Love Divine.

As temperaments and likings differ diverse are the ways by which one may approach and realise the ideal of love. The *Bhakta* considers the relation between himself and his ideal as one of part and whole, organ and organism, or one of those earthly relations viz., servant and master, child and parent, wife and husband and the like. He worships in every form, high or low, his ideal—the Essence of Love inexpressible—"अनिर्वचनीय प्रेमस्वरूपः"—and looks upon creation with all its good and evil as a Divine *lila*. To the *Jnani* it is the Atman, associated with an inscrutable power, that has projected the panorama of the world. And he rejoices to see the One without a second everywhere, in his own self and in others. But Divine Love has its grades. As it evolves it becomes wider, purer and loftier. And when it reaches its culmination it has its fruition and fulfilment. Then the lover and the Beloved, the individual soul and the Paramatman lose their separate existence and become one in blessed *Samadhi*.

Those who are blessed with Love Divine are the salt of the earth. Moulding the higher destinies of mankind they command a power before which brute force is like a straw. They die to live, for their careers—long tales of wonderful sacrifices, are the sources of inspiration to remote posterity. With hearts that 'beat with each throb of all the hearts that ache, known and unknown,' they breathe forth, while they live, an atmosphere of love, amity and good-will. In his all-embracing love Buddha, the Light of Asia, offered his life for an insignificant goat that was

going to be sacrificed. Dying on the cross Jesus, the Messiah of love, prayed for his persecutors saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Full of Love Divine Pavhari Baba welcomed the relentless cobra when it darted its mortal venom into his body as a messenger from the Beloved. In his high-souled pity for all that suffer Sri Ramakrishna, the latest embodiment of perfect toleration, truth and renunciation, declared, "I shall gladly undergo millions of births if I can help a single weary soul." In his upward flight towards *Samadhi*—that was so natural to him—he prayed to the Divine Mother that he might remain in a lower plane and be not lost in the Absolute, for otherwise he would not be able to work out his mission of serving the world.

To-day men are divided against men and ate on the look-out to thrive at one another's expense. In the universal rush towards the greatest power nations are at war and busy in manipulating the forces of nature for inventing far surer and easier weapons of destruction to cripple one another. Religion, the panacea for all evil, has been relegated to the position of a mere intellectual assent. Peace and goodwill have become airy nothings. Now it is only Vedanta with its highest synthetic and rational background and its message of love, universal and dynamic, that can save the world and heal its sores, cuts and bruises.

"रसो वै सः, रसं ह्यत्मा लभ्यता आनन्दो भवति।"
"God is Love. Whoever tastes Divine Love attains eternal happiness."

BRAHMACHARI BHAVACHAITANYA.

PLACE OF MIRACLES IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

(1)

EVEN in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, by such an able author as Swami Saradanandaji, one is tired of the intrusion of miracles such as the enlargement of his coccyx at a particular period of his Sadhana and the like. Besides every page is strewn broadcast with visions and trances as if that pious man was only a *visionary*. The mention of so many visions really makes one sceptic as to the very reality of those events. Thus our religion has become a veritable mess of miracles and supernatural events from which it has become well-nigh impossible to glean out the solid fact of truth and stern reality." These words of a well-meaning friend of mine, a very distinguished student of our University, still ring in my ears with all the bitterness with which they were uttered. He is a sincere soul but is a bit puzzled, being unable to test the veracity of some of the unique experiences of Sri Ramakrishna Deva by treating them in the mens-trium of his scientific knowledge.

Yes, there happened certain events during the period of Sri Ramakrishna's Sadhanas, and, for the matter of that, in the lives of most of the spiritual leaders of the world, which are beyond the ken of our ordinary vision and thus naturally give rise to the suspicion in the scientific mind, that these phenomena more or less belong to the domain of miracles. Ordinary mind generally calls for scientific explanations for every happening as if that magic alchemy has been able to solve every riddle of human life and presses for them in the case of psychic or religious experiences as if the progress of religion can be measured by the laboratory barometer or the truth thereof tested in the intellectual crucible of the common people. Even how many physical modifications can be demonstrated by science,

so that they may be understood by all? For the clear understanding of a thing both the subjective and objective study is necessary. How many people among the illiterate know that water is a compound of two gases and not a simple ingredient? The boors and uneducated negroes do not understand even the most proved scientific experiments. It requires a good deal of previous training to be brought to the point of understanding an experiment. Before that one cannot understand it. It is an absurd proposition to say that what science has proved must be accessible to all people. In that case there cannot be any utility or justification for the university education, the sustained effort in a particular branch of science or all the training for years together, if any great scientific deduction can at once be understood by the commonalty. So in order to be convinced of any physical phenomena by means of scientific proofs, there must not only be a perfect and unimpeachable evidence on the side of the phenomena themselves, but a good deal of previous training on the part of those who want to see and understand them. Before that it only indicates our rashness to give an off-hand judgment on any matter. Again if we brand a thing as impossible on the ground that we are not conscious of it that also makes our path bristled with difficulties. Of many things we are not conscious. It can hardly be gainsaid that there is no colour because a blind swears that he does not perceive it. A deaf denies the existence of sound-sensations, but still we feel that they exist for all that. Again who among us has seen his brain? But can we ignore it on the strength of all our accumulated evidence against its physical perception by the organ of sight? Consciousness is not always

co-existent with physical existence as we understand by it. Again like the physical phenomena, it presupposes a certain degree of fitness to be conscious of the psychic or spiritual phenomena. For the profane, knowledge is barred everywhere, either in the domain of the spirit or matter. Thus in trying to understand a thing we always forget to consider if we are fit to receive the demonstration or not, whether we have permitted our body and mind to become fit instruments for their discovery.

This fact is painfully true if we judge of the various spiritual realisations of a devotee. We laugh at them as mere miracles, phantasies of a weak mind or unreal dreams of a sleeping man. There might be some vestige of justification in these grave pronouncements if they were uttered after the critic had risen to that high spiritual altitude. When we judge of these matters we often tread on a forbidden ground whose barest fringe has not yet been touched by the physical science. Even after the agelong experiments and investigations of all the savants of the world into an infinitesimal part of these wonderfully variegated modifications of nature, they cannot as yet definitely say whether it is a phenomenon or noumenon. And still they rush in to give verdict on facts which are outside the scope of their physical senses.

The human being does not like to believe in anything which is not guaranteed by his own intellect. But how rash it is to brand a thing as impossible if it deviates from the common rut. There must be a sudden disillusionment if we only look at the aftermath of the visions and trances of the devotees around which gyrate all the arguments of the scientific mind as these experiences puzzle them. Instead of weakening or paralysing the devotee, they only strengthen him all the more, make his intellect clearer and clearer, infuse into him new stamina to fight with the cravings of the flesh or temptations of the senses, help him to stick to the path

of truth and virtue, guide him along the path of *sadhana*, strewn over with difficulties and detractions, kindle in his heart the Promethean fire of spirituality and at last carry him to the haven of his journey abiding in eternal bliss and beatitude which no human mind can conceive of, nor language can give an expression to. The highest and most delicate perceptions of the spiritual world cannot be the property of the mean intellect —the tagrags and bobtails of humanity. They require another training, another effort and lifelong struggle,—even then many years must pass away before one is favoured with one blessed ray of the effulgent Light. Then why, a man may ask, should one give up this worldly pleasure and run a wild-goose-chase after what is so uncertain and far off? Really the wiseacres of the world do not risk their sense-gratifications for the future hope of spiritual felicity. But that is not all. We go on merrily drinking deep these gay pleasures to their bitterest dregs until one day we rub our eyes in wonder and anguish to see that the thirst for enjoyment has not abated by so much a jot or tittle, while the power of the senses to pursue further has been blunted by age, disease or infirmity. Then a voice from within whispers: 'This is not the way to happiness. Leave it back. Despise your wealth as mere tinsels, gew-gaws and baubles; shun the palaces and pleasure-gardens as mere shanties and paddocks. Run away from the urging of senses as from the venomous hood of a deadly cobra. Proceed straight along this way—the path of renunciation that leads to Immortality—with humility and contrition.' The fortunate few take up the hint and follow the call of conscience and become holy and pure while the rest are again submerged in the mire of nescience with closed eyes, lest they may coil back in horror and affright at the spectre-dance of the horrible scenes, coming in quick succession in their miserable lives.

The most peculiar characteristic of these

visions is that they are not the property of any particular man in any age or confined to one latitude and longitude, but history shows that they are the common heritage of all people following that path, however much they may be separated from one another by distance of time or place. And again curiously enough they generally happen in the lives of the people, illiterate and unaggressive, so that there cannot be any possible room for the piquant contention that they are biased from a study of one another's lives. Rather is it not due to the fact, that because all of them pass through the same stage of spiritual consciousness, transcend more or less the same stadia of spiritual progress and tread more or less along the same planes of realisations that they experience much the same kind of spiritual visions and trances? The heart in one is the heart of all, belonging to the same group however distanced by time, place or circumstances; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature that can separate one superman from another; but one blood rolls uninterruptedly, an endless circulation through all these men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and truly seen its tide is one. Thus visions, whether seen in the lands of the Pharisees and the Sadducees or in the desert of Arabia, coincide more or less with the visions perceived by the same master-minds either at Nadia or at Dakshineswar. Is it not an ironical reflection on the soundness or otherwise of our own judgment to cast a squintish look of mistrust on their nonpareil sobriety or think of them as noodle or crazy when the world at large stands or falls by their commandments, still pays homage at their feet, carries aloft the banner of their message and turns to them, being disgusted with the ephemeral pleasures, as the ultimate source of inspiration and happiness? But what a fallen time! What a travesty of truth reigns over the world! Foolish people ask you, when you have spoken what they do not wish to hear, 'How do you know it is

truth and not an error of your own?' But we know truth when we see it, as we know when we are awake that we are awake. It is no proof of man's understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases; but to be able to discern what is true is true and what is false is false—this is the mark and character of intelligence.

But there is the other side which we do not like to less emphasise. It must not be construed from what we have stated above that the visions of various gods and goddesses are indispensable in the path of religious progress, or in every case a *sine qua non* for the higher divine realisations. Higher spiritual realisations may come and, in fact, they not infrequently come, unattended by these visions. These are but the milestones in the way of progress and they can only measure the way of progress and must not be thought of as the be-all and end-all of the struggle for God-realisation. It is quite possible that the devotee may experience one or two visions in the beginning of his Sadhana by the help of concentration or the play of certain emotions; but if he stops short of all further attempts, thinking that to be the consummation of his devotion, then he will only be deluded by a self-deception. Again people are not wanting who cast sarcastic looks upon those beginners, who do not see supernatural visions and thus belittle their sincere efforts. To these people miracle-mongering and religion pass for one and the same thing. Exclusive concentration for those visions or bragging upon them is no part of religion and often incapacitates the aspirant for further progress. That alone constitutes true religion and indicates sure milestones in the way of a devotee's progress which makes a man holier and purer day by day, kindles in his heart the lambent flame of spirituality, helps him to gird up the loins with truth, and disregard the world for its sake, whets his desires in the quest of God, turns him back from the temptations of the senses, and lastly gives him an impetus to come to the

summit of his goal, transcending all the obstacles in the way—now be it through these visions or without them. If a man sees these visions but at the same time does not feel within a greater hankering after God, then he is still outside the domain of true religion and his visions are the results of a weak brain. They have no bearing upon his real progress. And again without seeing any visions if a man feels holier and purer day by day, finds in himself more strength to fight with the evil propensities of his mind and lives in closer communion with God, then he is surely following the right path and in time he would be blessed with divine visions if they are so necessary for his progress. A certain devotee of Sri Ramakrishna Deva, not having seen any vision even after long meditation and protracted struggle, one day came and laid before him the burden of his mind. "You speak like a stupid," answered Sri Ramakrishna with a smile, "Do you think a vision or two during meditation is all that is required for the realisation of God? Is that a great or creditable thing in any way? True renunciation and faith help much more than all the visions put together in the path of God. Narendra* rarely sees any vision, but look at his sacrifice, renunciation, strength of mind, faith and steadfastness."

Visions may or may not come in the life of every devotee. But these are invariably seen in the lives of the Incarnations and great Messengers of God because they embody and exhaust in their lives all the phases of worship and devotion, so that men of all shades of opinion and whims, diverse predilections and temperaments may find in them friends, philosophers and guides to suit the particular proclivity of their mind and illumine them each in his own way. Thus an Incarnation is later on claimed by all people, holding diverse views, as their particular prophet, because everyone finds the fulfilment of his

ideal in that great soul. The Presbyterians, the Quakers, the Methodists, the Roman Catholics, the Protestants all draw their inspiration from the simple life of that Carpenter's Son, and yet the views they hold are often as different as poles asunder. Sri Ramakrishna mixed with all the religious devotees of the time that came to him. Though they belonged to various sects, yet each one of them claimed him as his own man. Thus he was a source of perennial inspiration to all whether he sat in company of Keshub Chandra Sen, or sang with Vaishnav Charan, or attended the mystic circles of the *Tantrik* devotees, or mixed with the *Kartabhajas*, or conversed with monks on the problem of Advaita Brahman or on the teleology of the universe. Those who followed the path of devotion, or associated visions with the progress of Sadhana drew equal felicity from his company as the men who did not believe in these visions and treaded on the way of knowledge or action. "Those who are Paramahansas," would often say the Master, "must pass through all the phases of religious experiences." He followed all the paths and found by actual experience that Truth alone is the goal of every way and the same goal is realised whatever path one sticks to with sincerity—a great legacy, the greatest perhaps achieved by any great soul in the spiritual history of the world, for a disputing people scratching each other's eyes like wild vultures, to prove that his God alone is true whereas my God is false. It is an actual resuscitation of the eternal truth, the rehabilitation—not by empty jabbering but by lucid demonstration—of the sayings of the Rishis of old that 'the Real is one but the sages call It by different names'—'एकं सत्यम् वदन्ति'.

ANANDA.

* Later on famous as Swami Vivekananda.

THE STORY OF MANKI.

(Adapted from the Yuga-Vasistha Maharamayana)

MN ancient times there was a Brahmin named Manki who after visiting the various holy places of Aryavarta was returning home. He came across an extensive forest through which his way lay. It was an intensely hot summer day and the sun was shedding its rays, burning, as it were, that forest region. The Brahmin Manki, much afflicted by the fierce rays of the sun, sat down under the cool shade of a tree for rest. By his visiting many holy places his mind had become introspective and as he sat down there the thought of the impermanence of the worldly life came uppermost in his mind. He thought to himself : " I have visited many holy places, but the doubts of my mind are not yet quelled and I have not found peace within: I have not also come in contact with any great soul who can give me spiritual enlightenment. My body has wrinkled and the mouth has become toothless through age, but my intense desire for the impermanent worldly objects is not abated by any means. I have had many births and deaths, but the mind with its insatiable thirst for enjoyment is getting fresh fuel everyday and does not get satisfied at all. Oh! what a pain, what a misery! O sun! you are burning by your fierce rays, the trees and shrubs of this forest; but a heat more intense than that of your scorching rays is burning the vitals of my heart. Overpowered by doubts I am unable to see the Truth and am consumed by the fire of longing for Truth. Is there any great soul in this sun-baked forest who can pour the balm of peace into my feverish soul ? " " There are freed, great souls who can cool the fever and heat of the soul consumed by the fire of worldly disease ; " —said the great sage Vasistha standing behind Manki. Manki, suddenly hearing this unexpected reply, said, " O Divine Sire! who are you? Your holy and calm presence gives an inexpressible joy to my soul." Vasistha said : " O Intelligent One ! I am the Muni Vasistha by name, for some reason I was passing through the forest to a certain destination and on the way I met you here. Your dispassionate mind and in-

tense longing for Truth are really commendable." Manki said,— " O Divine Being ! The seed of finite and selfish desires within me is not getting destroyed, but is increasing in potency and is leading me like a slave to undesirable and forbidden paths. Blinded by the dense darkness created by the desires, I have lost the true sight and am mistaking the unreal objects for real ! O Sire ! I ask you what the way is for me who have fallen into the gloom of ignorance,—the way which will lead to Real Bliss. Bless me by giving instructions which will cure this disease of the world."

Vasistha said : " O Brahmin, just as the trees in spring time nourished by fresh sap spreads new shoots and foliage, thus fed by desires many unreal imaginations arise in the mind of the Jiva. As in the endless void, there is nothing but silence and void, so in this world there is nothing but the Conscious Brahman. This extensive world is but the expression of Brahman. Just as the earthen pot is not anything different from and independent of the earth, so all worldly objects are nothing but the Intelligent Brahman. The seer and the seen are all Brahman. O wise Brahmin, when all existent objects are of the nature of the One Conscious Brahman, where is there the separate existence of yours and mine ? The Ego, this ' I ' is non-existent, all adjuncts of the ego are false and illusory, and everything is the One Brahman. By such knowledge one gets released. When such an easy way is at hand and open to you, it is but foolishness to suffer from the miseries of the world. But how great is the power of worldly desires ! Just as the fish, without having any idea of the dire result, does not give up the meat of the bait, but sacrifices its life, so man, blinded by delusion without knowing what is of permanent benefit to him, does not give up the worldly objects till he is snatched away by death. He who sees the Changeless, All-pervading and Blissful Brahman in all worldly objects, has his desires quelled and attaining to the knowledge of Brahman obtains ineffable peace and calm. Dependence on external objects constitutes the bondage

of the world, and freedom from that means release. Therefore the wise should renounce the love for worldly objects and abide in the Blissful Brahman."

The Brahmin thus receiving instructions from the sage Vasistha attained to the knowledge of Truth and became merged in ineffable peace.

BRAHMACHARI ANANDA CHAITANYA.

LIFE AT SHANTI ASHRAMA.

SWAMI Prakashananda spent the month of June at the Shanti Ashrama (in St. Antoine Valley, California) with some twenty students who were privileged to join the Yoga classes held there this year.

The weather was generally favourable for the classes to be held in the open throughout the month. The large spreading oak-tree, carved with the symbol of Shiva, afforded us a wonderful shelter during our meditations.

The day commenced at 6 a. m. with chanting and meditation, readings from "The Crest Jewel of Wisdom" and hymns, Upanishads at noon and readings from the unpublished Gospel of Sri Rama-krishna in the evening.

During the meal hours our Swami always read from Swami Vivekananda's Works, and allowed a few moments for discussion on various subjects.

The all-night Dhuni service was held on June 15th. The night was beautiful. The huge fire on the triangle altar sent sparks heavenwards and we were reminded of what the sages taught in ancient times of how the Absolute was symbolised by a huge fire and, we, the tiny sparks thrown out into Maya to wander like lost sheep over the worlds, seeking knowledge of our true nature, until at last a little awakening comes, and like the Prodigal son in the Bible we arise and go to the Father. Then do we consciously take up our cross and by hard and repeated stumblings do we undo the Karma of countless lives. Some were given Sanskrit names, and the Swami invoked the blessings of the Masters upon them. The whole night was made holy by chantings, prayers, readings from Sanskrit sacred literature and hymns.

Our environment was full of opportunities for spiritual unfoldment. To one living in India all this might not seem strange. But to us in the West it is a most rare and wonderful thing and considered it a great blessing to be away from the

markets of trade and be able to forget the eternal striving for worldly possessions and enjoyments and turn our thoughts exclusively to things spiritual with the help of a blessed Acharya as guide.

To most of us going yearly to the Ashrama it has been a veritable pilgrimage. Blessed are those of us who have found in our Swami a friend who with infinite patience and love helps us out of all our difficulties and ever encourages us with such words as these, "You are the children of God, no harm can reach you --children of Immortal Bliss." "Cast off this faint-heartedness, yield not to weakness, It doth not befit thee." (Gita Chap. 2, verse 3).

DURGA DEVI

(Clara M. Pette).

A BHAKTA'S SONG.

Sing we Krishna, sing we the boy of Gokul ;
From the heat and toil of the day we rest us ;
Cool the evening breeze by the flowing waters ;
Come to us, Krishna.

Thou the sun-born, splendid with youth that
fades not,
Thou beyond the empire of Time, our master ;
Lo, the world deludes us, but thou abidest,
Lovely, immortal.

All that seems is Thou, were our eyes not blinded ;
All that is Thou art ; as the foam of sea-surge
Which appears and fades are the lives of mortals ;
Thou art the ocean,

Full of wonders, glad in unceasing movement ;
Yet for us, for me Thou art only Gopal
Dream-wrought, whom the Bhaktas adore, the
cowherd,
Krishna Govinda.

Was it thou who sang to rebuke Arjuna,
Sang the song undying, the awful war-song ?
Yea, but books suffice not ; to Thee I cry out ;
Come to me, Gopal.

G. F. HUNSON.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 234.)

**प्राणाहृत्यैव संतुष्येन्मुक्तिवेन्द्रियप्रियैः ।
शानं यथा न नश्येत नावर्कीयेत वारुमनः ॥३६॥**

39. The sage should be satisfied with merely ministering¹ to the vital functions and not with things pleasing to the senses, so that knowledge may not be destroyed and the mind and speech frittered away.

[Verses 39-41 set forth the lessons to be derived from Vâyu, ordinarily rendered as 'wind,' but having also the broader and inner significance of 'vibration' or life-function' (*Prâna*). Verse 39 deals with the latter phase of the principle, and the other two verses with external air.

¹ Ministering etc.—i. e. Just as the Prâna-Vâyu merely requires food to sustain the body, so the Yogi also must eat to live, not live to eat.]

**विषयेष्वाविषयद्योगी नानाप्रमेषु सर्वतः ।
गुणदोषव्यपेतात्मा न विषज्ञेत वायुवत् ॥४०॥**

40. The Yogi, moving amid sense-objects possessed of diverse characters, should not be attached to them, keeping his mind absolutely free from their virtues and shortcomings, like the wind.¹

[¹ Wind—which remains unaffected by the good or bad odour of things over which it blows.]

**पार्थिवेष्विह देहेषु प्रविष्टस्तदगुणाभयः ।
गुणैर्न युज्यते योगी गम्भीरायुरिष्वास्महक् ॥४१॥**

41. Even though entering material bodies on earth and associating with their attributes, the Yogi with his eyes always on the Self, is not affected by those attributes, like the wind by odours.

**प्रस्तर्द्वितम् लितजडमेषु
ब्रह्मारबभावेन समन्वयेन।
व्याप्त्यव्यवस्थेनमसङ्गमात्मनो
मुनिर्भरत्वं विततत्त्वं भावयेत् ॥४२॥**

42. Even though living in the body, the sage, through his identity with the Self, should reflect on the unity, non-attachment, and sky-like trait of the omnipresent Atman, which runs as a substratum through all movable and immovable things.

[Verses 42 and 43 bring out the resemblance of the Yogi with the Akâsha, commonly translated as sky or ether. According to Hindu philosophy, Akâsha is the first and finest of the primordial elements (*Mahâbhutas*), is indivisible and present everywhere. So it is a fit exemplar for the absolute omnipresence of the Atman. The sage should reflect on this.]

तेजोऽचक्षमयैर्बंधिमेंघाधौवायुनेरितैः ।

न स्पृश्यते न भस्त्रद्वत् कालसृष्टैर्गुणैः पुमान् ॥४३॥

43. As the sky is not touched by things which are the products of fire, water and earth,¹ nor by clouds driven by the wind, so a man² should not be touched by things which are the creations of time.

[¹ Fire, water and earth—With Akâsha and Vâyu these form the five successive Mahâbhutas in the initial creative process. We have used here the common English equivalents of the Sanskrit terms *Tejas*, *Ap* and *Kshiti*, which are highly open to criticism. Fire, water and earth are only types or convenient gross manifestations of the subtle principles or states which may roughly be rendered as heat, liquidity and solidity. The reader should remember this inner significance of all these terms to really understand in which sense a particular word occurs in a certain passage.

² A man etc.—i. e. realising his identity with the Atman.]

**स्वच्छः प्रकृतितः जिग्धो मातुर्जस्तीर्णभूर्वृशाम्।
मुनिः पुनात्यपां मिश्रमीक्षोपस्थिरकीर्तनैः ॥४४॥**

44. Pure,¹ genial by nature, sweet and a source of imparting holiness² to men,

the sage—resembling water—purifies all, being seen,³ touched and praised by them.

[¹ *Pure etc.* It should be noticed how these adjectives apply both to water and the sage.

² *Holiness etc.*—e.g. the sacred rivers and lakes etc.

³ *Seen etc.*—One becomes pure by seeing touching and singing praises to the sacred waters as well as the saint.]

तेजस्वी तपसा दीपो तुर्धर्षोदरभाजनः ।

सर्वभक्तोऽपि युक्तात्मा नादसे मलमधिवत् ॥४५॥

45. Bright¹ resplendent with Tapas, powerful, with no receptacle² for food except the belly, and eating everything,—the man of self-control, like fire, is not polluted (thereby).

[Verses 45 to 47 relate the similarity between the sage and the fire.

¹ *Bright etc.*—The adjectives in this and the

next verse are applicable alike to fire and the sage.

[² *Receptacle etc.*—The fire consumes only what is put into it; so does the all-renouncing sage accept only what is offered to him.]

क्वचिच्छब्दः क्वचित्स्पष्ट उपाख्यः व्रेय इच्छताम् ।

भुङ्गं सर्वत्र दातुणां दहन्प्रागुत्तराशुभम् ॥४६॥

46. Sometimes disguised,¹ sometimes patent, being resorted² to by those who desire welfare, he eats everywhere from donors, burning their past and future evils.

[¹ *Disguised*: the fire by ashes, and the Jnani by assumed madness and the like.

² *Resorted etc.*—People make sacrifice in the sacred fire, and entertain the Jnanis, and are thereby ennobled in spirit. This explains the last line.]

(To be continued.)



REPORTS AND APPEALS.

The First Report of the Sri Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Rangoon. From January to June '21.

This Sevashrama has not only given asylum irrespective of caste or religion to the poor people from every part of the town but also from remote districts. To quote from the remarks of Lt. Colonel J. F. Good, I. M. S. "The Hospital is well stocked with drugs and appliances.....The Medical Director is Dr. N. N. Parakh, L. F. P. & S., L. M. (Glasgow) L. S. A. (Lond.) and the staff consists entirely of medical practitioners who give their service voluntarily.....The nursing staff is entirely voluntary and great credit is due to them for the excellent work they perform and their devotion to duty."

We are extremely glad to learn that during the short period of five months beginning from 30th January, 1921, the institution has been able to ameliorate the sufferings of nearly 6000 patients. The indoor ward No. 1 which is used at present consists of 24 beds. The total number of inpatients admitted during the period was 252. Out of this 214 were discharged cured, 4 left treatment,

1 was sent to the General Hospital, 1 was sent to the C. D. Hospital, 12 died and 20 were still under treatment. Altogether 13940 patients were treated at the outdoor dispensary of which 5638 represents new and 8302 old cases.

The total receipts amounted to Rs. 10,009-10, and the total expenditure to Rs. 8,929-8-3 leaving the balance of Rs. 1080-1-9. The financial strength of the institution, we are sorry to find, has not been in proportion to its manifold development. The preliminary expenses incurred for the equipments and arrangements exceed the donations received up till now for that purpose and the monthly subscriptions, at present, do not meet even the monthly recurring expenses. The authorities of the Sevashrama are in urgent need of funds to meet the expenses for the equipments of another ward consisting of 24 beds and for the erection of a shed for the out-patients and their companions as also for a covered passage for the voluntary workers—doctors, which are of great necessity in the rainy season.

We hope philanthropic persons will come forward to help this non-sectarian and highly useful Home of Service. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged by—Swami Shyamarendra, Monk-in-charge.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Seashrama, Kankhal, Dist. Saharanpur, U. P., for August, 1921.

Indoor patients:—There were 2 old and 19 new cases of which 13 were discharged cured, 4 died and 4 were still under treatment.

Outdoor patients:—Of the total number 3362 there were 1449 new and 1913 repeated cases.

	Rs. as. p.
Balance of the last month	5473 6 3
Donations and subscriptions in Aug. 1921	430 2 3
Total	5903 8 6
Total expenditure	436 3 6
Balance in hand	5467 5 0

The Hon. Secretary has the pleasure to announce that one gentleman has contributed Rs. 3500 for the Vidyant Operation room in memory of the late Sujit Ramgopal Vidyant and the late Srimati Brajeswari Vidyant. The sum of Rs. 6500 is still wanting for the outdoor dispensary building. Persons, desirous of perpetuating the memory of their dear relatives and friends, may contribute Rs. 1500 for each memorial room. All contributions are to be sent to Swami Kalyanauanda, the Hon. Secretary.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Library and Free Reading Room, Haridwar, U. P., for August and September, 1921.

It is two years since this useful institution was started. The Library at present receives 32 papers in seven different languages viz. Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Guzrati, Gurumukhi, Sindhi and English. These include 7 daily, 11 weekly and 14 monthly papers, which are placed on the table of the Reading Room. In the month of August last, 1574 persons made use of the Library and Reading Room and 1671 persons in September. Books and papers were also issued outside the Library to

19 and 44 readers in August and September respectively.

	Rs. as. p.
Balance of the previous month	547 1 0
Receipts in Aug & Sept. 1921	114 6 0
Total	661 7 0

Expenditure for Aug. & Sept. *258 15 6

Balance 402 7 6

*Includes the half-yearly house-rent.

Contributions in aid of the Library and Free Reading Room will be thankfully received by Swami Karunananda.

The Report of the Vivekananda Society, 78/1 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, for 1920.

The Calcutta Vivekananda Society has been doing many useful and benevolent works for the last few years in the field of religion and philanthropy. This is what the annual report of the Society, for 1920, briefly states:—

The Society arranged 38 public religious meetings in which eminent scholars and religious teachers delivered addresses and read papers. The Birthdays of Lord Buddha and Swami Vivekananda were also specially observed in public meetings.

12 monthly and 1 special religious conversations were held in different localities of the city, which were conducted by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. 32 weekly religious services were held in which religious texts, such as the "Gita" and Swami Vivekananda's "Jnana-Yoga" were read and explained by the monks of the same Order. Religious worship and special Pujas were daily conducted and the members were helped to practise meditation.

From the Public Charitable Homeo Dispensary under Dr. N. Bhattacharjee 998 cases were treated free and medicines supplied gratis. 31 students were helped with monthly and occasional donations to the amount of Rs. 274. A small relief work was started by the volunteers of the Society to combat an epidemic of Cholera at Dakshin Barasat, off Mugrahat, E. B. Railway.

169 books were added to the Public Library and Free Reading Room of the Society.

totalling 2322 volumes at the end of the year. 31 Newspapers and Magazines were placed on the table of the Library and Free Reading Room, out of which the editors and proprietors presented 28 and 3 were the gifts of 2 members. There were 478 members on the roll and 45 subscribers, yielding a monthly income of Rs. 186 when fully realised. The total income amounted to Rs. 3286/-^{1/3} including donations to the Building Fund and the total cash of the year was Rs. 4332. The

total disbursement was Rs. 2760 leaving a balance of Rs. 1572.

The first and foremost want of the Society is the proposed Vivekananda Memorial Hall and a habitation for the Society—for its Office, Library, Dispensary etc. The total donation to this fund is Rs 1131 only, mostly subscribed by its members and a few sympathisers. We hope the generous public will help this really deserving philanthropic institution in its noble attempt.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Hindi.

Kavita-Kaumudi, Part II. By Pandit Ramnaresh Tripathi. Hindi Ratnamala Office, Allahabad. Crown 8vo., Pp. 16 + 553. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 3.

This anthology of modern Hindi poems is a companion volume to *Kavita-Kaumudi*, Part I, in which old Hindi poetry has been represented. The book contains select poems of 40 Hindi poets, living and dead, beginning with Bharatendu Babu Harischandra, and ends with some miscellaneous poems. There is a spirited sketch of the rise and growth of the modern Hindi poetry as an introduction, and short biographies have been given of each poet, which makes the collection quite interesting. The majority of the poems given are in Khari Boli—the language gradually coming to the fore—though a good many are in the Vraja Bhāshā also. Those interested in Hindi poetry will find in the book under review a good bird's-eye view of the subject, which will prepare them for more extensive study. The get-up of the volume is handsome and we heartily recommend it to all lovers of Hindi verse. One or two biographical sketches might be profitably shortened to make room for some more poems.

Pathik. By the same author. Pp. 81. Second Edition. Price 8 annas.

This is a patriotic tale in five cantos, written in delightful verse (Khari Boli), which strikes a deep note of pathos combined with a genuine love of nature and for one's own country. The poem has also a bearing on the present national movement within the country, and its popularity

is testified to by its running to a second edition in so short a time. The brochure is neatly printed.

Milan. By the same author. Third Edition. Pp. 37. Price 4 annas.

It is a nice love-story, the scene of which is the Italian city, Milan, the struggle for whose freedom gives the poet an opportunity to introduce the other dominant feature of the poem, love for the motherland. Pandit Tripathi wields a graceful pen, and this has made this tiny booklet a success.

Shanti aur Anand ka Marga. Translated by Sj. Dharmanand Tripathi. To be had of the Dharm Granth-mala Office, Barabazar, Calcutta. Crown 8vo., Pp. 66. Price 8 as.

This is a Hindi translation of Swami Paramananda's well-known book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness," published by the Vedanta Society, Boston. To those who want a simple and direct exhortation to spiritual life, this translation like the original, will be of great help. The more such books are popularised the better. We wish the book all success.

Atma-Samyam. Translated by the same. Pp. 37. Price 4 annas.

This little book is translated from Swami Paramananda's "Self-mastery." This translation, we are sure, will do useful work. The paper and printing are good. We recommend the series to the public.

Bengali.

Deser Raj O Palli Vyavastha. By Prabat Chandra Dey. The Saraswati Library, 9 Rama Nath Mazumdar's Street, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 36 + iv. Price 3 as.

The young writer pleads for the real service to the country and the improvement of the villages through the introduction of sanitary measures and true national education that would put sufficient stress on Brahmacharya and the building of character and would combine the science and practicality of the West with the knowledge and spirituality of the East. The economic degradation and dependence of the country is a menace to the preservation of the moral integrity of the people of India and to solve the great economic problem of the country it is absolutely necessary, as the author rightly says, first to start and improve especially the cottage and small industries connected with the food and cloth problems and thus try to make India economically independent.

We do not relish the unnecessary use of English words with which the pamphlet is interspersed, sometimes even without their translation in Bengali, and feel sorry to come across a number of spelling mistakes which a little careful reading of the proof-sheets could have easily avoided.

Sanskrit.

Mahimna-Stotra--Translated into Bengali by Swami Prajnananda Saraswati. Published by the Saraswati Library, 9 Rama Nath Majumdar's Street, Calcutta. Price 2 as.

We are glad that these beautiful hymns to the God Shiva have been presented before the Bengali knowing public in such a readable form. The grace and beauty of the text has been maintained in the Bengali reproduction and the notes will be greatly appreciated by those who are not familiar with the Sanskrit language. We wish the paraphrase with word-for-word translation had been continued to the end of the book. The printing and get-up are nice and the pamphlet has been moderately priced.

English.

Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master, Vol. II. By Swami Saradananda. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 250 + viii. Price Rs. 2.

This volume of the unique life of Sri Ramakrishna deals with the wonderful period of his Sadhana up to the practice of Tantrikism--a period passed in the intensest longing for the realisation of God. The vivid descriptions of the various stages of that superhuman Tapasya, com-

ing as it does from the pen of one closely associated with the life of the Master during its closing years, the brilliant word-pictures of that zeal and thirst which ate him up day by day, the supreme ease and naturalness with which the great teacher passed from one consummation of his religious experiences to another, the lucid and succinct demonstration of the usefulness of the neglected scriptural injunctions, have a peculiar value, we trust, in the present age, when the whole humanity is reeking under the hammer-blow of uninspired materialism, to show to a benighted world the true path of happiness and real felicity.

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1. *Thoughts and Glimpses*. 2. *Ideal and Progress*.
By Sri Aurobindo Ghose. Published by the Arya Publishing House, 4/1 Rajabagan Junction Road, Simla, Calcutta. Pp. 21 and 94.
Price as. 8 and Re. 1 respectively.

We have much pleasure in reviewing these two small books coming from the master pen of Sri Aurobindo Ghose who needs no introduction to the learned public. He presents the ancient Indian spiritual ideal, modifying it to modern requirements. Though there are disputable points his writings, vehicled in powerful and dignified language and containing lofty and valuable thoughts, are, no doubt, a source of inspiration to many.

The first book considers, in the light of Vedanta, such metaphysical questions as: What is man in his real nature? How is he connected with this world of diversity and multiplicity? What is he destined for? What are the obstacles that thwart his progress to the goal of life? And how does God, if there be any, reconcile the apparent contradictions and anomalies that we see all around. The author means by man 'an un-created and indestructible soul that has housed itself in a mind and body made of its own elements.' In otherwords 'man is God hiding himself from Nature, so that he may possess her by struggle, insistence, violence, surprise. God is Universal and transcendent Man hiding himself from his own individuality in the human being. The animal is Man, disguised in a hairy skin and upon four legs; the worm is Man writhing and crawling towards the evolution of his Manhood; even crude forms of Matter are Man in his inchoate body. All things are Man, the Purusha!'

In striking contrast with the Nihilistic and the Semi-Nihilistic view of the world, the universe, according to Sri Aurobindo Ghose, 'is not merely a mathematical formula for working out the relation of certain mental abstractions called numbers and principles to arrive in the end at a zero or a void unit; neither is it merely a physical operation embodying certain equation of forces. It is the delight of self-lover, the play of child, the endless self-multiplication of a poet intoxicated with the rapture of his own power of endless creation.' Man the Divine has thus been 'playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.' His so-called bondage is nothing but his self-forgetfulness. Let him know what he really is. Liberation which is not self-annihilation or extinction, consists in the discovery of his inherent Divinity, the fountain-head of love, power, knowledge, joy and unity. It is religion that serves as the guide and points out the way. How beautifully does the author enumerate the incalculable gifts of the different religions of the world? 'Paganism increased in man the light of beauty, the largeness and height of his life, his aim at a many-sided perfection; Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity; Buddhism has shown him a noble way to be wiser, gentler, purer; Judaism and Islam how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God; Hinduism has opened to him the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities.' Sri Aurobindo has before him the vision of a spiritual revolution in the near future when all the God-visions of each of these religions would embrace and cast themselves into each other and save mankind. May the vision of the Idealist be materialised is also our prayer!

The second book discusses at length the two important topics viz., Ideal and Progress, defines Yoga, bringing out its true significance and points out the natural trend of the Eastern mind and the Eastern culture. 'Ideals,' says the author, 'are truths that have not yet effected themselves for man, the realities of a higher plane of existence which have yet to fulfil themselves on this lower plane of life and matter, our present field of operation.' To the pragmatical man of sense-enslaved consciousness who evaluates the values of life by what he calls tangible facts 'ideals are not truths, not realities, they are at most potentialities

of future truth and only become real when they are visible in the external fact as work of force accomplished.' But to the superconscious man whose intellect is 'not imprisoned in its own workings,' who can dive deep beyond the flux and 'can reflect something of that Master-Consciousness' that governs the cosmos, 'the ideal is a greater reality than the changing fact, obvious to its outer-senses.' 'The Real, the Idea, the phenomenon—this is the true order of the creative Divinity' according to Sri Aurobindo. A harmonious blending of the idealist and the pragmatist, the originative soul and the executive power is what is required for perfect manhood. Napoleon and Alexander belong to this type. 'They have been great executive thinkers, great practical dreamers.' 'The Messiah or Avatar is nothing but this, the divine Seer-Will' towering high above the majority of mankind and 'descending upon the human consciousness to reveal to it the divine meaning.'

Next Yoga or skill in works is dealt with. 'By Yoga is signified a spiritual condition of universal equality and God-onion,' when there is 'a perfect adaptation of the soul and its instruments to the rhythm of the divine and universal Prakriti, liberated from the shackles of egoism and limitations of the sense-mind.' It is not an ordinary kind of skill in works, otherwise the consummate general, the cunning lawyer and the expert shoemaker would have been each a Vogi.

Change, according to the author, is the secret of life, though 'the conservative mind is unwilling to recognise this law.' 'Because the change was always marked in the internal but quiet and unobtrusive in the external we have been able to create and preserve the fiction of the unchanging East.' The East unlike the West saw revolutions, spiritual and cultural and this is why political and social changes, though real and striking, fall into the background here. But 'it religion has changed its form and temperament, the religious spirit has been really eternal, the principle of spiritual discipline is the same as in earliest times, the fundamental spiritual truths have been preserved and even enriched in their contents' in the East. 'The hope of the world,' bursts forth the author, 'lies in the reawakening in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision' that is latent in dead forms and 'in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident' in 'forms stirred, dynamic and effective.'

NEWS AND NOTES.

The Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work. Khulna

The public has already been informed that since last June the Mission has been carrying on the relief work in the affected area of Shamuagar. A very large number of people of that place have been greatly emaciated due to starvation and are placed in absolute nakedness. As they have no cloths to cover their bodies many are sure to fall victims to various diseases due to exposure to cold in this winter season. The Mission is trying its best to help those distressed men and women with both old and new cloths, and medicines. At present the Mission is distributing rice among 2749 recipients in 76 villages at the rate of two seers per head per week without any distinction of age or sex. As the area of work is gradually extending it hopes that the generous public will come forward to help their distressed brothers and sisters to the best of their capacity.

Contributions will be thankfully received at the following addresses :— (1) Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. (2) Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur, Howrah.

Industrialism—Its Dangers and Remedies

Professor Radhakamal Mookerjee of the Lucknow University in course of his lecture on women's place in economic life at Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow, dwelt on the evil influences of city life upon population, both in weakening the vitality and in diminishing the birth-rate. He stated that not only is the birth-rate smaller but the death-rate in cities is higher than in villages.

Of the Indian cities Cawnpore shows the highest infantile death-rates and next comes Lucknow. In Cawnpore more than half the number and in Lucknow more than one-third of the children die within a year of their birth. In industrial towns in England only one out of ten children dies in the same period. All this makes a strong case for child and labour welfare and the civic conscience must be aroused in provinces to grapple with the serious problems of urban mortality and disease.

Congested slums and overcrowded workshops

in our industrial cities have their deleterious effects not merely on mortality, but they also lower the tone of domestic life and in fact lead to criminality and vice. A working class that maintains infant marriage and lives herded together, men and women, like beasts in cellars and far away from the checks and influences of the family and communal life, easily falls a victim to vice and disease. Moreover in mill towns there is a striking excess of males over females. Such unnatural conditions are undoubtedly a contributory cause of vice in our cities. Revival of agricultural industries as well as village and cottage production for women will be thus seen to be an indispensable step not merely towards the economic rehabilitation but also towards the maintenance of the Indian family tradition.

* * *

Great is the danger of industrialism and the injury it has already done in India is nothing short of appalling. Those who have cared to study the effects of industrialism on the moral life of the labourers as well as those coming in close contact with the industrial centres and towns of India, can never be blind to the fact that domestic morality is being greatly endangered and is even breaking down owing to the dangerous conditions which the industrial expansion has created in the country.

Cut away as the poor people are from the beneficial influence of society and as it often happens of even their own families, there is no wonder that they would easily succumb to the temptations of the towns. Industrialism would exist at least to some extent as the tendency of the age clearly indicates. But it is necessary to put a stop to the increasing moral break-down of the workmen.

To check the unnecessary expansion of big industries and maintain the moral tone of the people :—
 (1) Indians should cease to imitate an artificial and high standard of living, and following in the footsteps of their forefathers must try to live, as far as present conditions permit, a plain and simple life, which still exists to some extent in villages unaffected by Western influence. (2) Cottage

arts and industries are to be introduced and developed all over the country and their products should be given preference to those manufactured by mills and factories. (3) The economic condition of the poor agriculturist is to be improved by the introduction of modern scientific methods of farming etc. that would greatly increase the production of the land. Besides there must be some suitable cottage industries that may be attended to in leisure hours to supplement the income and may even be depended upon to save the people from starvation during the failure of crops. (4) Proper provision should be made to enable the workmen to earn a living wage enough to enable them to live with their families near the factories etc. when these are situated far from their homes. And above all it is absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy moral atmosphere at all such places.

But the first step towards the real solution of the problems of the agriculturist and the labourer is to teach them to work out their own problems themselves. Ideas are to be put into their heads and they will do the rest themselves, for no one can work out another's salvation in the true sense of the term.

Wisdom of India In a Remote Country

The following interesting correspondence we have received with great pleasure :—

To The Editor, Prabuddha Bharata,
Sir,

In course of my wandering I came upon a sage this summer. He is a Norwegian by birth, but something of a Brahmin in spirit. Need I tell you that I met Prof Sten Konov of the Kristiania University.

Here is a man teaching the wisdom of India in this remote northern country. And what is more—when I met him I felt that the man lives what he preaches.

It is wonderful to sit here and talk Advaita. Dr. Konov feels that the Absolute Reality though completely unqualifiable yet has something to do with this world. I urged upon him the statement that this world has the unfortunate position of letting us see, through its imperfection, the Perfection of God. But it is not necessary that this world is real.

He of course insisted that one should not be a fanatic; for all statements are an approximation towards stating the same One Truth. And above all what we need is that "Karuna," that look of "Daya" (compassion) which is in the eyes of the Lord Buddha. We need that 'Ahetuki-daya-sindhu' (unbounded compassion for compassion's sake) attitude towards all existence in order to experience the full meaning of the Absolute Reality.

I am not going to tell you more about our arguments. Need I add that Dr. Konov is a real Guru who has the tolerance of a true Advaita-vadin. He is going to study Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. I do look forward to the day when he will probably lecture on our prophets.

The wheel of Vedanta is moving. In Dr. Konov I find another spoke of the same wheel. Though our paths may be different we meet at the end. And this sense of an ultimate Unity of Truth has been given me abundantly by this sage.

Sept. 1, 1921. Dhan Gopal Mukerji.

The Possibilities of the Charka

In an age in which most complex and gigantic machineries are being worked by steam-engines, oil-engines and dynamos etc. the simple and tiny Charka that can be easily accommodated in even a corner of the humblest cottage looks indeed very insignificant and unpromising. But the part that the Charka played in the old days of plenty and economic independence cannot be judged from its humble appearance, for it produced the yarn that woven by hand-looms not only used to clothe the Indian population but was also responsible for the export to foreign lands of the famous muslin—"the webs of woven winds" "those fine textures the thread of which could not be followed even by the eye" and other valuable merchandise. The primitive plough along with the simple spinning wheel supplied India with food, cloth and comforts. The destruction and neglect of home arts and industries has brought about the present-day economic degradation and dependence of India and their innumerable attendant evils; and unless these arts and industries are rehabilitated, there can never be brought about the economic salvation of India.

India is primarily an agricultural country where the peasantry constitute the bulk of the population.

The majority of these spend a considerable portion of the year in indolence as they have not work enough for the full year and do not follow any subsidiary occupation. From his lessons gained from the Khulna famine Dr. P. C. Roy has been convinced that the Charka will prove to be the salvation of the agricultural people in India and that the spinning wheel and the hand-loom which require very little capital outlay are calculated to play an important part in India's economic salvation if both the classes and the masses take up the work with all the seriousness which it undoubtedly deserves. And these conclusions gain all the more importance as they have been arrived at by a great scientist who is intimately associated with at least half a dozen industries fitted up with up to date plants and machineries and who cannot, therefore, be charged with any partiality for home and small industries.

"The population of Bengal," says Dr. Roy, "is about 45 millions or $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores. Even if we leave out of consideration $3\frac{1}{2}$ crores and pin our faith on one crore of able and willing workers (men and women), and if they earn only half anna per day by spinning or Re. 1 per month this would yield us one crore per month or twelve crores of rupees per year. There is no reason however why one should not earn Rs. 2 per month in the above manner. This would add twenty-four crores of rupees to the income of the people. Political economy tells us that one should not waste his time over unproductive undertaking if he can utilise his time more profitably. But here you have to deal with a people who are notorious for their indolence and who have no alternative occupation or industry to fall back upon in time of such dire distress."

The output of the Charka and the hand-loom is no doubt very limited compared to that of the modern spinning and weaving machineries; but the numerical strength of the Indian population is not an insignificant factor and should not on this account be left out of consideration. And Dr. Roy very rightly remarks—"It is true we are industrially very backward, but one thing is to our advantage, our population is to be counted by millions and the magnitude of our numerical strength ought to turn the balance in our favour." A true business man that he is Dr.

Roy says with his admirable practicality—"In order to make the Charka effective in the remote villages, there ought to be an organisation for supplying the people with raw-cotton and taking back the finished yarn after paying the wages of labour either in cash or in kind. To ensure success it is however necessary that the Bhadralok-classes should set the example as it is well-known that the lower classes always take the lead from the higher classes and are incapable of any independent initiative."

The time and energy which all classes of people waste for want of useful occupations entail a great national loss especially in these days of economic distress, of scarcity of food and cloth, the two greatest necessities of man. If a fraction of this time can be properly and usefully utilised the economic condition can decidedly be improved individually as well as nationally. All people should bear in mind the dignity of work which is certainly better for human progress than sloth or lethargy as the Gita says कर्म ज्यात्याहकर्मणः--action is superior to inaction.

Famines have been raging in India on more or less wide scales almost every year and the organisations that carry on relief works do nothing but to distribute food, cloth and medicine to the distressed. And even able-bodied men and women have no other occupation than to receive articles of food and idly pass away their time waiting for better days! Such a course is economically unprofitable, may even demoralising. It is therefore very desirable that the Famine Relief Organisations should take upon themselves the task of introducing to the people useful and profitable cottage arts and industries and of these the working of the Charka and the hand-loom has undoubtedly the greatest claim as it would solve the problem of clothing which comes next to that of food--that men may earn an income that would go at least to some extent to save them from the throes of starvation. Such a step is all the more desirable as besides enabling the people to help themselves at least partially during the period of the failure of the harvest, it would also go to no small degree towards their permanent relief. Besides the resources of no charitable organisation being unlimited, thus a larger number of really helpless persons, who are physically unfit to earn

their livelihood, would get the chance of being relieved which may not be possible otherwise ; and the strain on public charity would also be comparatively less taxing.

The Hindu Temple, San Francisco, America

The public lectures at the Temple by Swami Prakashananda of the Ramakrishna Mission have a steady increase in attendance and sometimes the lecture hall barely sits the people who hear the Swami with great pleasure and joy—thus writes a correspondent.

Another letter says: Under the leadership of Swami Prakashananda the Vedanta Society of San Francisco has prospered in every way. There has been an increase of attendance at all services as also of the membership. The Swami's lectures, both public and private, are growing in power and understanding, so that sometimes the seats are all filled in the Temple Auditorium.

The Executive Committee of the San Francisco Vedanta Society, we are glad to learn, has decided at a meeting held on Sept. 15 to send \$50 for the work of girls' education in India.

The Durga and Kali Pujas In Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras

This year the celebration of the Durga Puja on the 8th, 9th and 10th October was a unique event in the annals of the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The Puja was performed on a grand scale with great enthusiasm and devotion. His Serene Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, had previously arrived with His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Vice-president, to join in the celebration and grace the occasion with their presence. The image of the Divine Mother, brought all the way from Calcutta to Madras, was placed for worship in the spacious hall of the Math which was tastefully decorated and brilliantly lighted. People from different parts of the city came to witness the novel function—the worship of this special aspect of the Divine Mother with elaborate rites and ceremonies as enjoined in the Shastras. The sonorous and melodious chanting of Vedic hymns by the Brahmin boys of the local Ramakrishna Students' Home before the Goddess on the Puja days had a great elevating influence on

the minds of the hearers. On the 9th October, the most important day of the Puja, Tamil and Marhatta Bhajana parties sang devotional songs which were highly enjoyed by the local people. A large number of friends and admirers of the Mission were invited to see the Puja and on the Mahashammi day about 400 Bhaktas partook of the holy Prasadam with great joy in the Math premises. The worship of 'the Mother of the Universe,' the chantings, the devotional songs—all performed in the inspiring presence of Their Holinesses, created a spiritual atmosphere and awakened the sense of devotion and bliss in the hearts of many a devotee who were made to feel the divine presence of the Mother in Her image of earth.

The Kali Puja was performed on the next new moon night in the Math temple itself. It was the worship of the Goddess Kali—the Blissful Mother as Sri Ramakrishna called Her—Who, pleased with the worship of the Priest of Dakshineswar, manifested to him Her real nature and made him realise that 'She is no other than the Brahmin of Vedanta, the personal aspect of the impersonal Brahman.' The beautiful image, also brought from Calcutta, was placed by the side of the life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna installed on the altar. The worship commenced at 10 p. m. and the last function, the Homa, was over at 4 o'clock next morning. It was indeed an inspiring sight and a source of noble emotions to witness the worship of the Divine Mother conducted by devotees who have renounced the world and have dedicated themselves solely to Her service.

A Notice

We published an advertisement in the February issue of the Prabuddha Bharata this year stating that the Mysore Government Security and Marriage Assurance Co. Ltd., Mysore, intended to establish certain charities under the guidance of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. We are authorised to announce for the information of our numerous readers that there is no connection whatsoever between the Mission and the company, although the latter proposes to carry on its charities in the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

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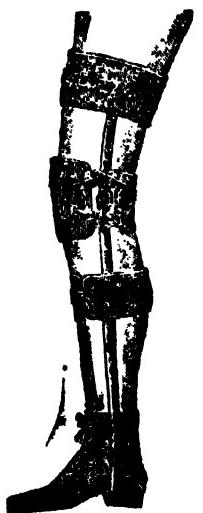
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ON MANTRA AND MANTRA-CHAITANYA.

The Mantra-shastris (upholders of the Mantra theory) believe that some words have been handed down through a succession of teachers and disciples, and the mere utterance of them will lead to some form of realisation. There are two different meanings of the word Mantra-chaitanya. According to some, if you practise the repetition of a certain Mantra, you will see the Ishta-Devata who is the object or deity of that Mantra. But according to others, the word means that if you practise the repetition of a certain Mantra received from a Guru not competent, you will have to perform certain ceremonials by which that Mantra will become Chetana or living, and then its

repetition will be successful. Different Mantras, when they are thus 'living,' show different signs, but the general sign is that one will be able to repeat it for a long time without feeling any pain and that his mind will very soon be concentrated. This is about the Tantrika Mantras.

From the time of the Vedas, two different opinions have been held about them. Yaska and others say that the Vedas have meanings, but the ancient Mantra-shastris say that they have no meaning, and that their use consists only in uttering them in connection with certain sacrifices, when they will surely produce effect in the form of various material enjoyments or spiritual knowledge. The latter arises from the utterance of the Upanishads.

ON CONCEPTIONS OF GODHEAD.

Man's inner hankering is to find some one who is free, that is, beyond the laws of nature. The Vedantins believe in such an Eternal Ishwara, while the Buddhists and the Sankhyas believe only in a Janyeshwara (created God), that is, a God who was a man before, but has become God through spiritual practice. The Puranas reconcile these two positions by the doctrine of Incarnation. That is, they say that the Janyeshwara is nothing but the Nitya (Eternal) Ishwara, taking by Maya the form of a Janyeshwara. The argument of the Sankhyas against the doctrine of Eternal Ishwara, viz., 'how a liberated soul can create the universe,' is based on false grounds. For you cannot dictate anything about a liberated soul. He is free, that is, he may do whatever he likes. According to the Vedanta the Janyeshwaras cannot create, preserve or destroy the universe.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

PERSONALITIES that represent the highest principles in their life and action receive the spontaneous offerings of love and regard, homage and worship, which come from the very depth of the human soul. The Prophets and Saviours of the world—the Buddhas and Christs—the Messengers of the light spiritual—appeal to mankind because of their super-human renunciation and unflinching devotion to Truth, their same-sightedness and universal love towards all men and women, whether saint or sinner, Aryan or non-Aryan, Jew or Gentile, as also for their message of hope and peace which heals up the wounds of the lacerated heart, lays bare before man the vision of the world be-

yond, untouched by the troubles and tribulations with which his earthly existence is inseparably connected, and brings solace to the weary soul when everything else fails.

The important lesson that we learn from the lives of the greatest of the world's religious teachers is that the real world-forsakers alone become the movers of the world and the transformers of the lives of mankind, when they come out of their self-imposed retirement to preach the special message which they are born to deliver. After years of intense spiritual Sadhana they burst upon society all of a sudden, without any previous notice.

advertisement or propaganda work to prepare the people to receive them, to break down the encrustation of ignorance and superstition that gathers round the religious life of the people, hampers their growth and even threatens their very existence with annihilation. They thus create an environment favourable for the evolution of society leading a vegetating life at the time of their advent. The impetus that comes from these world-shaking giants to the very soul of the people awakens them from the state of spiritual torpor and infuses in them a new spirit and hope that strengthen them to march on along the path of advancement and progress. And not infrequently looked upon in the beginning as thoughtless reactionaries these world-teachers prove to be the greatest benefactors of mankind, because the apparent revolutionary changes which they bring about in the psychology of the people are really the necessary consequences of a natural evolution, however dangerous it may appear to the superficial critic. No wonder then that with the rolling on of years they are accepted as the Saviours of the world, as Messengers of truth whose power no obstacles, however great, can ever hope to successfully stand.

Merged as their individuality is in the Universal Consciousness, freed as they are from passions and desires that create bondage for the soul, all works for any personal end cease to exist for them, and on coming down from the plane of the transcendental consciousness they find themselves in a transfigured world radiant with the effulgence of the Spirit. But when they come to see the miserable condition of the people around them sunk in ignorance and worldliness

the feeling of deep sympathy and compassion for the suffering humanity touches the inmost chords of their being and out of the fullness of heart spontaneously flows their unconditioned love, and without any sense of personal gain they take upon themselves the burden of the suffering and the miserable, and devote their life for the labour of love,—for the salvation of others. Though separated by age and clime, these Supermen, who belong to a class by themselves, show an amazing resemblance, whether we study their life and teachings or consider their superhuman love and renunciation, or even the stories and legends connected with their birth, Sadhana and ministry. But those who call themselves the followers of these prophets forgetting this remarkable coincidence on fundamental points are ordinarily inclined to believe that each particular teacher is the only true prophet and the religion that he preached the only true religion on earth.

However, the new light that is being brought by science, the critical and comparative study of the scriptures of the world and above all by the conscious or even unconscious interchange and assimilation of one another's ideas and ideals is bringing about a broadening of the mental horizon, a wonderful transformation in the life and thought of all civilised nations. With the deliverance of the human mind from the clutches of ignorance and bigotry and the consequent clearing of the human understanding the people have commenced to appreciate and honour others' prophets and seers, faiths and religions also, and this tendency, if unhampered, would in course of time so develop the spirit of toleration that the world might be ultimately led to the acceptance of all

religions as true. It is indeed a most significant fact that at the present times there are truly religious and orthodox people, and it is gratifying to note that their number is fast increasing, who do not hesitate to accept, though no doubt in their own way, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge from even the once despised heathens or Mlechhas and honour their teachers and saints as well. It is the increase of the bounds of knowledge that accounts for this better understanding.

It is not without adequate reasons that the universal truths and principles of the Vedanta have already penetrated into distant lands and commenced to influence, to no small extent, the religious thoughts of many among the Christian nations of the West, while the essential teachings of Christ find acceptance in India and the sacred personality of the Son of God appeals readily to the religious instinct of many a devout Hindu who see in that wonderful life the realisation of the principles which their own religion embodies, for the doctrines of Jesus as distinct from institutional Christianity are so similar in their essential nature to what the Vedanta has been teaching for ages before the advent of Christ. The life of Sadhuva and Sanayasa—of spiritual practice and renunciation—that he lived is so characteristically Oriental, common to Hinduism as well as its rebel child Buddhism, that in studying the life of the Prophet of Nazareth, a Semitic though he was, one is reminded of the Buddhist missionaries who preached in the dominions of Ptolemy Philadelphos, king of Egypt, and of Antiochus Theos, king of Syria, as the Asokan edicts conclusively indicate, or of those brotherhoods that sprang from the 'contemplative frater-

nities of India'—the Therapents of Egypt, and the Essenes of Palestine who, as Pliny describes, dwelt on the Western shore of the Dead Sea—a revered hermit clan, without any women and money, that was resorted to in large numbers by men who were weary of existence, a society, in which no one was born but which lived on perennially for ages. It is in the life of a true world-forsaker and a real Yogan that he who was known as Christ lived—in his meditation and Self-realisation—that lay the secret of his perfection and spiritual power.

Whether we consider the moral precepts of Christ as we learn from the New Testament, or his spirit of non-resistance, or his message of Shanti—"peace on earth and good-will to men," we find in him a typical Asiatic teacher so much akin to those great souls who preceded as well as succeeded him and became founders of great religions and systems of thought. But transplanted from the land of the ancient Babylonian and Assyrian civilisations in the soil of the Greco-Roman culture, the religion of meekness and non-resistance which Christ preached became aggressive and persecuting. It is a grim irony that ever since the conversion of Constantine "who established faith and exterminated heretics," and more than four centuries later of that of Charlemagne, the protector of the church, who carried the cross at the head of his army and Christianised by compulsion the pagan Saxons and other aboriginal races, the followers of Christ have been pursuing a course of action, a policy of aggression and persecution, wars and massacres—and all these in the name of the Prince of Peace who, as he spoke of himself, came not to destroy but to fulfil !

Christianity is not synonymous with the Western civilisation. Its engraving on the soil of the cultural descendants of the warlike Hellenes has been an incongruity, for its dominating note has unfortunately been more material than spiritual. In modern times things have come to such a deplorable state that even zealous Christians are constrained to acknowledge that religion counts but little as a factor in the life of the Western nations and the attitude of the generality of people in the West, though the Christian missionaries seem to be more anxious to save the soul of the heathens than that of their own co-religionists and are busy more than ever to create spheres of influence in non-Christian lands in the East, is no better than that of 'benevolent indifference' towards matters religious. The term Christian civilisation has thus come to imply rather a social and political structure than a spiritual scheme of life.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is within you" has said the Master, but with honourable exceptions the followers have cared more for earthly possessions and temporal powers with the result that Mammon and Odin have continued to triumph over Christ! But there is still time for the Western nations to be true followers of him who preached the noble teachings as are enshrined in the Sermon on the Mount, to subject themselves to the moulding influence of the Christ-force and allow themselves to pass through the process of real conversion or spiritual metamorphosis,—thus to realise the spiritual ideal that was upheld and embodied in the life of Christ. And this spiritual regeneration is essential not only for the peace of the world but also for their own well-being, as the soul of the West,

uninspired as it is generally by the message of Christ, has been overburdened with worldly ambitions and possessions. The fetish of colour-consciousness and race-superiority that has obsessed the spirit of modern European civilisation divides mankind by raising racial barriers which cannot be surmounted unless there is accomplished an entire change of heart and a totally different appraisement of what constitutes the essentials of life. This cleavage of humanity is the greatest obstacle that stands in the path of the realisation of the solidarity of man and the establishment of true spiritual Brotherhood which has been the dream of all the greatest of the prophets of the world. And a universal religion alone can help men to transcend the bounds of religious fanaticism, racial prejudice and national selfishness, and serve as the cementing principle to unite nations with nations by the bond of love and good-will, by laying bare before mankind the vision of the Spirit, the One without a second, the common substratum of all that exists, animate or inanimate. Perfect equality can be established on such a spiritual basis alone and on no other.

On the tree of the Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (*Sat-chit-ananda*) there hang innumerable bunches of Ramas, Krishnas, Buddhas, Christs, &c. Out of those, one or two now and then come down into the world and produce mighty changes and revolutions. It is all one Avatar that we have, having plunged into the ocean of life the one God rises up at one point and is known as Krishna; and when after another plunge He rises at another point, He is known as Christ.—Sri Ramakrishna.

AT THE FEET OF THE MOTHER.*

AT the feet of the Mother at last after a long and wearisome journey through the villages, fields and workshops of the South! Of course pilgrimage was not the main objective, but pilgrims we are in any journey in India, whatever may be the motive of our wanderings. For in North, South, East and West we see in every village a temple, in every city a more magnificent shrine with beautiful architecture and craftsmanship and we see also as we go along main roads or cart-tracks the gods and goddesses in our trees and tanks, in agricultural fields where harvest is reaped or in front of the village workshops where looms and lathes are playing from morn till night. And this in every part of India with specific variations that all the more emphasises the unity of our spiritual norms and categories. What a surprise to a Northerner, for instance, when he sees in the villages of Mysore, in Tanjore or even in Tinnevelly in the South his familiar Goddesses, Bhadrakali, Chamundi, Bhagavati and Kali. But with this difference that in the North the worship of Shakti or the Primal Energy has been assimilated to the highest teachings of the Upanishads and the Vedanta, while in the South it is more or less left to the non-Brahmins and it is here less esoteric and intellectual and more magical and propitiatory. But who knows perchance a Brahmin, or a non-Brahmin Seer or Guru may re-discover the Shakti cult, expand and renew it and the spiritual revolution may mean not merely an uplift of religion from an abstract formal and barren mono-theism into a due recognition of the pluralistic elements in life and in nature, a rescue of the processional car of God from the mire of acrimonious disputation and of

formal ceremonialism, but also a social revolution which will bring with it a new message of uplift for the non-Brahmins who will contribute to deepen and expand the spiritual currents of society. That will be to illustrate the fundamental unity of India in the sphere of religion.

And at Kumarika let all feel their unity and brotherhood at the Divine Feet of the Mother. And people and tradition say that the two rocks which form little islands at the southernmost point of the promontory are those Divine Feet which are washed still by the commingling waters of the two oceans, but the Goddess has chosen as her fit abode the temple on the shore at the southernmost point of the land when her original abode in the rocks became inaccessible to men when the oceans advanced.

Here, sitting at the Divine Feet with the waves of the oceans softly beating on them, one pictures the Mother steadfastly gazing at the glacier-clad Himalayas in the North, the Mother as one voice, the music of the Infinite, in the song of the waves eternally breaking themselves against the southern shores, in the warble of our meandering rivers, the Sarayu, the Jamuna, the Bhagirathi, the Narmada, the Godavari and the Caveri, and the sight of the Infinite in her eyes, in the inaccessible mountain fastnesses, in palm and coconut-clad lake or sea-shore or in desert expanses where she has specially manifested an aspect of her beauty or frowned in different places which become for us sacred sites of pilgrimage. It is this vision of the Infinite in the finite that the Mother seeks to impart to us in all her places of beauty in land or sea, desert or valley in her bewildering variety of finite symbolisms, local deities and communal gods.

What vision does she impart to us in the

* Written at Cape Comorin.

promontory as she casts a gaze at the breaking waves that lap at her feet, at the oceans that extend unto eternity, at the waves of the fertile fields of paddy at Tinnevelly and Travancore, and at the ever-receding Ghats? Here it is not Annapurna, the Divine Mother and sustainer of the world by means of food as she is in the fertile plains of the Ganges, she is not the Divine Mother and destroyer of the world by means of her tongues of subterranean fire as she is in Jwalamukhi in the Punjab. She is here as the Eternal Maiden who by her asceticism seeks the favours of the Eternal Ascetic. How significant again the intuition and the vision of the colonising Aryans who had colonised and settled in the then known Bharatavarsha, and dreaming of fresh lands that may yet emerge from the oceans at the farthest extremity of the jutting peninsula conceived of the image of a youthful daughter that sports in the ecstasy of her new creations and playful moods! But she is here more in penance than in play. For has she not lost her Lover with whom she was in a moment to be bound in the eternal ties of a due and sacred marriage? Alas! the moment passed away and the day dawned and the nuptials could not be celebrated before the vulgar gaze of mortals. From that moment she has become an ascetic even in her maidenhood. Aryans, Sakas, Huns, Mongols, Moughols and new races have come and stayed but the Mother feels that she has an unfulfilled vow. One moment of neglect and her whole life is one blank despair. She looks at the snow-capped Himalayas and their dark unfathomed caves and she finds one thing wanting. Her eyes dance with affection as she sees her heterogeneous stocks and congeries of stocks which have come to her lap but the thought recoils back like the waves,—there is no joy. As she sees her rivers and the plains flowing with milk and honey she experiences the diverse streams of cultures and thought-movements that have their sources here, that have expanded and

spread along the fertilizing rivers and that have mingled their offerings at her feet, but yet there is no harmony. As she gazes steadfastly at the ships and boats that ply the seas at the far distant horizon she heaves a sigh that the good is lost, for she has lost the True, the Good, and the Beautiful in one lost moment of idleness and she sits there serene and yet passionate in the Mahayajna of universal humanity, but the priests have left her, the Immortals who adorned the assembly have sneered in contempt and her Lover also has vanished.

The Gopuram of the wedding temple has been left unfinished and there the four pillars stand, alone, ghost-like, still uncared and undecorated. The cauldron in which the wedding rice and cakes were to be cooked has been turned into stone by the curse of the Maiden. Thus has India's palace of art and Truth been left unfinished, and the vessels in which our choice offerings to humanity were to be prepared are now all solid rocks. The rice and the bran have all been turned into sand and the pilgrims who bathe in the oceans still offer these sands to the ocean as rice and bran,—present India's poor substitutes for food and offerings to the ocean of universal humanity! And she sees this in grief every morn and noon as the pilgrims come and go and she minglest her mourn with the voice of the sea-mews that fly to inch and rock as the blackening waves are edged with white.

Long and long weary days and nights she has mourned for her lost Lover. Long and long has she counted the beads in her hand and waited for the fulfilment of her vow. He must come. How long can he leave his beloved at the rock-bound coast in the solitude of inaccessible forests and in the desolation of angry storms and cruel tides? He must come.

And as night comes on and she fondly broods on the past reminiscences of her lost nuptial night the passions surge in her heaving

breast and then the oceans roar and seek to engulf the land, and tempests rush through the land, boisterous and devastating, and all people say that the Maiden Goddess is angry and they keep the Eastern Gate of the Temple towards the ocean closed lest she cannot contain herself and give herself up to the angry seas.

She has long waited and cannot contain herself in her expectant agony. He must come, she thinks in the fulness of passion and hope, of joy and truth and then her passions are be-calmed. We find her then a subdued ascetic with curls of grey rocks and the *kashaya* garment of the red shore and the calm oceans as the softer tears of her eyes. And as day follows night, as the calm follows the boisterous, her penance follows her agony and this goes on through eternity. And shall it continue through eternity? It only her relentless Lover knows. The shock and collision of the forces of time and history which have shattered the fair vision of the fairest Maid, he has brought about and he alone can withstand.

Dhanushkodi may be more profound, more sublime than Kanyakumarika. Dhanushkodi is full of joyous recollections and victorious fights which have ended another long tale of agony and suffering. There India's ideal king of peace and goodwill has vanquished the ocean with his arrows and the

ocean is as quiet and peaceful as a lake, majestic in its grandeur.

But Kanyakumarika is more touching, more overpowering. At the southernmost point of this great land of lost causes and unfulfilled destinies the rock-bound coast, the tempests of the oceans, the arid sand-dunes, the desolation of the temple and the harsh noise of the numberless palmyra trees have a unique yet melancholy attraction. Those who are fighting truth's battles against hope, with whom failure and suffering are the only consolation will gain a new faith if they rest and sleep a while at the wave-tossed feet of the Mother, the Eternal Maiden, herself desolate and forsaken, who has drunk to the dregs her Lord's potion of despair. And in the boisterous passions of whose troubled heart, the passions of her children can find their complete rest and fulfilment. For he who has seen her troubled soul at midnight in the deafening roar of the oceans and the fury of the mad storms will subdue his despair and will gain a new faith and a new intuition when he will see her again as the playful girl in the morning, clad in her *garbika* attire worshipping the rising sun for another day of penance, another rosy evening of expectancy and another night of grief and trouble.

RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

THE MESSAGE OF LORD BUDDHA.²

BY SWAMI ABHEDANANDA.

THE real religion of the so-called Hindu people is Sanatana Dharma which in English might be translated as eternal religion. It is also known as the Aryan religion. Dharma means the law of Truth. This Dharma has been taught from pre-historic

times by the ancient Seers of Truth who realised the one-ness of the spiritual entity, as all-pervading and beyond the conception of the human mind, as neither the Creator, Preserver or Destroyer but as the fountain-head of the creative, preserving and destructive power. That eternal Truth is the foundation of Sanatana Dharma. the

*Ex-actr of a lecture delivered at Rangoon.

everlasting spiritual law which is our religion. In the Vedas God is not described as Brahmâ, Vishnu, or Shiva, but as the One Truth without a second. Truth is the eternal reality of the universe. That reality cannot be described in words and any one who reaches the eternal existence becomes one with it, transcending all the laws of birth and death; and the realisation of that state is described as the attainment of *Nirvana*, or infinite existence which means the cessation of sorrow, suffering, disease and death.

The eternal religion which was started from pre-historic times in ancient India was stated again and again by the great teachers. Among them was one, the greatest shining star, and that was Bhagavan Sri Krishna, who was the embodiment of the knowledge of the Vedas, which he gave out before the world about 1400 B.C. And there he said, "Whenever true religion declines and vice prevails, I manifest myself in human form to establish truth and destroy evil." True to the law of manifestation and the divine principle, about 550 B.C. there appeared in India the founder of the great religion which moved the world and whose followers now outnumber the followers of other religions. He was Prince Siddhartha, the son of a reigning monarch who lived in all the luxuries of Oriental fashion. In the midst of all those luxuries and pleasures his soul was awakened to the Truth. Of course, he was educated; he learnt all the methods of instruction given in those days, imbibed all the ideas of Truth and *Nirvana* and the method by which that Truth could be realised. In his teachings, Buddha mixed the same ideals of the Vedas and connected them with the principal methods of practice described in the different schools of philosophy then

prevailing in India. Through his asceticism and trials, after conquering tempter, he attained to the consciousness of the Buddhahood and then he became true incarnation of Divinity and manifested his powers to establish Truth a Righteousness and taught his disciples reform the evils of the country of that time. Thus Buddha might be called one of the greatest incarnations of Divinity.

The progress of Buddhism reached its climax about 1000 A.D. and then in India it began to decline on account of corruptions which got into it and the diverse forces working at that time such as Shaiism, Vaishnavism etc. In course of time Buddhism practically disappeared from India although it spread in other parts of the world surrounding India, and its neighbourhood. The teachings of Buddha were grand and wonderful. There does not exist in reality any difference between the teachings of Buddha and the teachings of the Vedas. Some people think that Buddha denied the soul-entity, which is delusion. The facts declare it and Sri Krishna taught it. The whole system of Vedanta repeats that the so-called Jivatman is a delusion. Did Buddha deny the Truth? He said that Truth is one and it is the only Saviour. He meant that anything outside Truth is a delusion. So man's personality which is the resultant of the combination of the five *skandhas* is a delusion. It does not exist throughout eternity. The Bhagavad Gita says that in the performance of functions, physical or mental, he must be a fool, a deluded being who thinks that he is the doer of his actions. He cannot perform anything. He has no power. It is the forces working through him that perform all these things, and make him feel for the time being through the power of

Avidya that he is the *Karta* or doer. In reality he cannot be the *Karta*. He must pass out and attain *Nirvana* or Buddhahood.

Why should we draw a line between Buddhism and Hinduism? Both are the same and if we try to separate one from the other the foundation is lost. Buddha did not teach anything new. He only showed us the hidden way that would make us seekers after Truth. Buddha said, "If Truth is the Saviour why should that Truth be kept away from mankind? Let everybody be benefitted by following it." Truth is the only Saviour and there is no other Saviour in the universe. Buddha's teachings are those of the highest philosophy known as Vedanta which was afterwards explained most beautifully by the great commentator, Bhagavan Sri Sankara. There is no difference between the Truth of Buddha and that of the Vedas, because Truth is one. Those who think that it is a separate system originated by Buddha are mistaken. Very few of the followers of Buddha understood the true meaning of *Nirvana*. Some considered it a state of nothingness, others thought it to be a state of annihilation and some others said it was not a positive state to be desirable. We find from the inward experience in our spiritual progress that Buddha did not mean anything different from the positive state. Here is what he said, "There is, O Brethren, that Abode, where there is indeed no earth, nor water, nor air; nor the world of Infinity of Space, nor the world of Infinity of Intelligence, nor the world of Nothing whatsoever, nor the world of neither Cognition nor non-Cognition; nor this world, nor the world yonder, and neither the sun, nor the moon. That I call, O

Brethren, neither coming, nor going, nor standing, nor birth, nor death. Without foundation, without origination, beyond thought is That. The destruction of sorrow verily is That."

There are hundreds of passages in the Upanishads describing the same state of Brahma-Nivritti where there is neither consciousness of the sense-perceptions, nor the consciousness of going or coming, nor the consciousness of Me or Mine; yet it is a positive state which is the ideal and reality and we must be one with that. What Buddha refuted was the personal Brahman. He did not dispute the absolute existence which is described as Brahman impersonal. Therefore the Message of Buddha teaches and spreads the same wonderful truth that has been taught several ages ago and that has been the ideal of human existence from the beginning of the human race. Buddha described the four noble Truths, namely, the existence of sorrow and suffering, their cause, their cessation, and lastly, the method by which that cessation could be reached. The same Truths were repeated in the Sankhya system of Kapila, and in fact, the same ideal and the same denial of Creator was emphasised by Kapila. There was no such thing as a personal God. Nature produced all these things. When *Prakrti-Purusha* could explain all this phenomenon, the existence of a personal God was superfluous. Buddha never mentioned a word about Ishvara. Neither did he deny nor affirm His existence. When a Brahmin came to him and asked him if he believed in Ishvara, Buddha replied, "Did I deny His existence?" India was at that time the hot-bed of philosophical discussions, but Buddha did not take any part in them. His sole object was to help humanity

and make people free from suffering, misery and death, and show them some way by which they could attain hap-

iness even in this world. His religion was a religion of humanity and for humanity.

MIRABAI.

OFTEN do we find saintly women on this earth in spite of the narrow view held by some who, in order to show the superiority of man, say that women cannot attain to the highest realisation of God. But this is a selfish view and its truth has been falsified many a time in the history of this world. The Hindu scriptures, however, recognise the principle of the fundamental equality of man and woman in the realm of the Spirit. The huge structure of religion and ethics of the Hindus has for its corner-stone this spiritual equality of man and woman. There can be no sex in the Atman and the Hindus cannot understand why a woman by the sheer strength of will and character cannot attain to the highest knowledge. It is a fact that there have been many saintly women in India and even some of the very greatest of the Vedic seers were women. In this short article the writer would try to paint the life of one of these saintly women -of Mirabai, the queen of Chitore, once the famous centre of Indian chivalry and valour.

From the snow-capped Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the Indus to the Brahmaputra the name of Mira is a household word. The devotees of Sri Krishna hold her in high esteem and her lyric songs are sung even by the country folk all over Maharashtra, Rajputana and other parts of India. Her image is still worshipped by all at Chitore side by side with "Ranchhore Deva"—the image of Sri Krishna worshipped by her.

Mira was the daughter of Ratia Rana, a Rathore chieftain of Marwar. She was born in about 1420 A. D. in the village of Maratha. From her childhood she was a lover of Sri Krishna. She was handsome and beautiful. She could sing and her sweet voice charmed all the people of the neighbourhood. She loved to sing the praise of Hari and men and women left their work, and children their play, to hear Mira's sweet Sankirtan. It was so very fascinating. People from various parts of

Rajputana flocked to the village to hear Mira. They were all carried away by her sweet melodious voice. There was such a heavenly light in her eyes, devotion in her heart, melody in her voice and deep feeling in her songs that everyone felt a Devi or a Gopi of Brindavan in her.

The story of the beauty of Mira and her sweet music passed on from lips to lips and from ears to ears till at last they reached Rana Kumbha of Chitore. He wanted to see Mira. So one day he left Chitore in disguise and came to Rathore. Mira's beauty and songs enchanted him and he stayed there rather longer than one could expect, making false excuses for his stay—so unwilling was he to leave Mira and her songs. Some days passed in this way till on one occasion he made bold to ask for Mira's hand in marriage and when Mira's father came to know that the visitor was no other than Rana Kumbha of Chitore he gladly accepted the proposal. So the Lily of lilies, Mira, was married to Rana Kumbha and the newly-married couple returned to Chitore which welcomed its queen amidst great rejoicings.

But her love for Krishna grew stronger day by day and she was carried away in its currents to the celestial realms far away from this material world. She forgot the ephemeral pleasures of the senses, but this troubled the Rana. The Rana was a poet and he taught the art of poetry to his queen hoping that this would bind her down to the sense-world, but unfortunately for the Rana it had quite the opposite effect. Soon the style of Mira began to differ from that of the Rana's; she began to sing the name of Hari in rhyming couplets. While the Rana with his appetite for power was piling obstruction to his soul, the queen gathered the world about her with her songs and grew in saintliness. And this made the Rana jealous and hate the queen whom once he had so greatly prized. But the Lord who ever takes care of his devotees appeared to the Rana

in a dream and told him not to be jealous of his queen mad with Divine Love. This changed the Rana's attitude and he built a temple within the palace-preincts for "Ranchhore Deva," the cowherd-boy of Brindaban. Mira spent her days in this temple singing the glory of Govinda with the Vaishnavas of Chitore.

Soon the Rana found that it was futile to look to Mira for conjugal happiness and so thought of taking a second wife. He took by force, according to the custom prevalent at the time, the princess of Jhalwar. But the Rana found no happiness even in this marriage, for the princess had given her heart to Prince Mandar.

In the meantime Mira passed her days in the service of her Lord "Ranchhore" and His devotees who visited the place. She herself would cook and feed the devotees of the Lord. One day there came a devotee who refused to take any food and on Mira's repeated entreaties replied that he was Prince Mandar and would take food if he could but see for once the princess of Jhalwar—his beloved. Mira accordingly arranged for an interview and this made the Rana furious with anger. He banished her from his kingdom and Mira became a beggar in the streets of Rajputana. But the Lord was with her and so wherever she went people flocked round her and even the deserts of Rajputana resounded with the sweet name of Hari.

But no more was heard the sweet name of Hari at Chitore. No more those festivities, nor the thronging of devotees from far and near and Chitore looked deserted and in mourning. The Rana realised his folly. He realised that Mira had won a greater empire and established her throne in the hearts of men on a strength beyond the power of the mightiest princes of the world. So he sent men to get Mira back to Chitore. When Mira returned the Rana craved her pardon but the ever-faithful Mira fell at his feet saying, "Dear Lord, I am ever your wife and maid." Happy was the reconciliation and from that time Mira was allowed to join in Hari-sankirtan parties in the public streets of Chitore which is quite against the custom of the land and especially for women of high rank. The queen's mixing freely with the common people in the streets of the city is an idea that the Rana could hardly bear. Yet this freedom was given to Mira that she might be happy at

Chitore singing the name of the Lord with all. She had forgotten that she was the queen, that she was a woman even, in her search after her Lord Govinda, the lovely cowherd boy of Brindaban. Such is the power and fascination of Divine Love.

Once there came a lord of a mighty empire to Mira's temple in disguise to hear her sweet music. Mira was singing the name of the Lord and the visitor was in raptures at the sweet voice and deep Divine Love of Mira. When she had finished he prostrated at her feet and asked her the way out of this Samsara, the world of duality, of happiness and misery, pleasure and pain. After a short discourse the visitor before departing put a jewelled necklace into the hands of Mira as his humble present to "Ranchhore Deva." Mira accepted the necklace. The news of the visitor in disguise and of the costly present reached the Rana. A shadow of doubt crossed his mind and he cast a look of suspicion on Mira's conduct. But it never struck him that a queen who had brushed aside with her feet the pomp and glory of royalty, could hardly prove unfaithful for a mere necklace. We judge others by our own standard and herein lies the seed of all trouble in this world. Ah! that canker-worm of jealousy once it enters into the heart works destruction making man mad turning love's delight to misery. The Rana thought that the queen was a disgrace to the royal house of Chitore and had brought dishonour on his lineage. The whole scene changed and Mira was no longer to him the song-bird of Divine Love but a pretender, luring the world with goodness to hide her own wickedness. Here was, he thought, a kite's beak giving the bulbul's note. He was determined to put an end to this and thought that red blood alone could purify the pollution.

The Rana signed a death-warrant but the ministers refused to execute it—so dear was the queen to the people of Chitore. The Rana sent the warrant, which asked Mira to put an end to her life by drowning herself, through a servant who placed it in Mira's hands as she was returning from the temple. "Tell the Rana," said Mira to the carrier, "The Hindu wife obeys her Lord." At dead of night when all were asleep Mira silently left the palace. None knew when she left. It was a clear starlit night. She came to the river bank and

jumped into the impetuous current of its turbid waters. As she fell she lost her consciousness. She saw a vision--a light of radiant orbs. The cowherd boy of Brindaban kissed her saying, "Mira, you have obeyed your husband, but you have a higher duty to fulfil. Arise, awake to live again and to teach the world." When she came to her senses she saw herself lying on the bank. Remembering the vision she walked on to Brindaban singing the name of the Lord on her way to the people who heard her and they were filled with Divine Love.

There was a great Vaishnava saint at Brindaban named Rup Goswami; and he had renounced lust and gold and would not even look at a woman's face nor touch a coin. So when Mira wanted to see him he refused to do so. But Mira sent the following words to him—"There is only one man in Brindaban and he is Sri Krishna; the rest are all Gopis, if Goswami thinks himself to be a man he must at once leave Brindaban, a place meant only for the Gopis." The Goswami was struck by her devotion and invited Mira to his temple, knowing that she would be no ordinary woman. From that time a sweet relation sprang up between them and each looked upon the other as a Guru.

The news of her appearance at Brindaban

spread all over Rajputana. The people of Chitore flocked to Brindaban and the Rana once more realised his folly. He left Chitore in disguise and came to Brindaban. He found out Mira and asked her pardon. But Mira fell at his feet begging to be excused for all the wrongs she had done to him. The woman and wife in her was still alive.

The Rana brought her back to Chitore but thenceforward she used to live half the year at Brindaban. Various legends are current regarding the final passing away of Mira. The most persistent one points out that the image of Krishna at Dwaraka was clef into two while Mira was praying before it and the great soul spirited away into the bosom of her Beloved—the eternal repose of all devotees.

This is the life history, most telling but unostentatious, of a great soul every moment of whose life was spent in the holy communion with God, who from the transcendental heights of divine glory came to look upon the world as vibrating with His resplendent love and where every creature, sentient and insentient, are emanations from that One Existence.

SWAMI PROBODHANANDA.



PLACE OF MIRACLES IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

II.

THOSE who flare up in the name of visions and trances, cry down much real incidents as the effects of imbecility or senility and laugh at scriptures and lives of saints replete with such instances, to them one may say without being guilty of any moral opprobrium, "Just see, here lived a man close to your city of light and learning, practised Sadhana for the long period of twelve years and saw many visions without impairing his strength of mind or losing his purity or holiness. His life was tested and his activities examined and sifted by people no less sceptic or pragmatic than you, but in the end all of them acknowledged the veracity of those experiences and bowed before his superhuman realisations. There-

fore you cannot declare all these to be mere hoaxes."

"There are," once remarked a great disciple* of Sri Ramakrishna Deva, "two outstanding features which I noticed, above all, in his character and which attracted me most to his magnetic personality. They are his great kindness and the power of pleasing everybody by fulfilling his respective desires." This great ability to work in the mind of different people and influence them in different ways, in fact, constitutes a characteristic feature of all Incarnations and the Special

*The late Srijut Girish Chandra Ghosh, the great Bengali dramatist and actor.

Messengers of God. In this connection one is reminded of those beautiful lines of Srimat Bhâgavatam which describe how Lord Krishna was viewed upon in the court of Kamsa by different people seated in that assembly. The lines run thus :

"The wrestlers saw him as an athlete of adamantine constitution, the common people as the peerless and supreme among them, the ladies as cupid personified, the cowherd boys as their own friend and the wicked kings as their chastiser. He was, again, looked upon as a child by his own parents, while Kamsa saw in him his very death. The ignorant took him for a simple boy of yet undeveloped features and the great sages as the Supreme Truth, while the descendants of Vrishni looked upon him as their Gracious God and thus viewed upon and scanned by different people, Sri Krishna entered the list with his elder brother."

Being endowed with this ability, uncommon among the rest of mankind, they possess the secret to guide the destiny of the people along different paths to the same goal without pauperising them of their own intellect, for it is never the purpose of God to bereave the world of its diversity and goad everyone to his degeneration through the same track. They help men to discover unity in diversity and show that all the different paths ultimately lead but to God as different rivers, taking sources from different mountains, mingle their waters in the same sea. This all-sidedness is the one great characteristic of the great saviours of the world.

It is also true that during the progress of Sadhana, the devotees acquire certain powers, psychic and supernatural, which if they use for their own personal ends would bring about their own downfall. By these powers they possess the capacity of healing, hypnotising, manifesting various feats of strength or assuming subtle bodies etc. These are extremely harmful in the path of Yoga. These turn the mind of the devotee from God to his own body, personal comforts, convenience or distinction. These psychic powers and their misuse have caused the ruin of many devotees. These are known as *Siddhis* and are divided into eight groups. But it is again and again reiterated in the Shastras that so long as a devotee's mind hankers after any of these powers he is far away from God. Sri Ramakrishna Deva often used to state

how he fervently prayed to the Mother, day and night, to throttle all his desires for the acquisition of these subtle powers. At one time he was requested by Hriday, his nephew and attendant, to pray to the Divine Mother to bestow upon him the boon of, at least, one of these powers. Then the Master was in a particular mood of mind and could not oblige any body. So he went to the Kali Temple and said to the Mother that Hriday requested him to beg of her some psychic powers. He at once saw in a vision the Goddesses Kali pointing to a heap of human ordure and asking him, "This is the power you pray for. Accept it if you like." Sri Ramakrishna Deva turned his face in disgust and promised never to make any such ugly importunity before the Mother. Later on he took Hriday to task for giving him such a nasty advice and never afterwards did even a slight desire cross his mind to acquire *Siddhis*. Whenever any one came to him for healing a disease, he would humbly disavow any claim for such an ability and send him to the Goddess in the Kali Temple. He again and again cautioned his devotees and disciples about these *Siddhis* lest even in their unguarded moments there might flash any desire to acquire those supernatural powers. He would often illustrate their uselessness, as they are quite out of proportion to the labour they entail in acquiring, by many interesting stories.

No doubt the great incarnations or prophets possess some supernatural powers; but they should not be looked for in this direction of showing miracles. They do not generally touch a dead body to impart into it the breath of life. But their power lies in another way. They can remove the tegument of our soul and help the inflorescence of the lotus in our heart by a look, touch or word and thus extricate us from the quagmire of illusion and ignorance. They command a man, "Be pure in heart," and forthwith vanish away all his impurities and he is rejuvenated with new enthusiasm, life, aspiration and hope. A man sinks in the mire of vice or runs down the precipice to the abysmal depth of ruin and destruction; they raise their finger and ask him, "Behold, the Kingdom of God is at hand and enter it." Instantly the man turns his face, shakes his body and passes into the realm of light and truth. The man who is immersed in the pleasures of the senses and

hugs them to his breast without knowing the divine spark of a religious life, understands his folly in a moment, by means of a kind word from their gracious lips, feels the presence of God and follows him as the pillar of smoke by day and column of fire by night. The wise precepts of these great souls stand as a beacon light in the midst of a wilderness, a peak in an ocean or an oasis in a dreary desert and their heavenly life shines as the star of the first magnitude in the heart of all to guide them safe along the treacherous ways of the world. In fact these are the real miracles of their life. This is how they infuse the dead and dull matter with virility and life. They touch a rotten scum and he becomes at once *crème de la crème* of the society. Emboldened by their favour the veletudinarian girds up his loins with strength and can challenge the whole world. They can illumine a darkened heart lying in that state for hundreds of years, by a ray of their kind look and in that direction lie their greatness and superhuman ability. This is the method of their activity and thus they can convert a man from the path of vice to that of virtue. This quality was seen in superabundant affluence in the life of Sri Chaitanya, the great incarnation of Nadia, who, by an embrace or touch, passed into a man's body an electric shock of spiritual fervour, and curiously enough other people, touched by that man, were themselves affected with religious ecstasy which they never experienced before, and cried and wept being overwhelmed with the rapture of God. In that way Sri Gouranga Deva travelled on foot alone, helpless and without any material resource, throughout a great part of India, flooded the whole country with divine love which coming in great cataracts drowned the people under the waves of the glory of God and washed away all their weeds and impurities. Christ asked a man with a withered hand, "Stretch forth thy hand" and he stretched it out. His hand was restored whole as the other. Therein does not lie the greatness of the Prince of Suffering. Again it does not indicate his real magnificence when he said to the dead daughter of the ruler of the Synagogue, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise," and the damsel arose and walked straightaway. Living in the midst of unleavened hearts and ignorant people he had to perform these miracles. These miracles may all be effaced from the face of the earth

like the drop of water in the bosom of a dry desert, but his great Commandment, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," will remain for ever so long as there will live one single human being standing on earth under the canopy of the sky and hankering after Truth and God. All his other deeds, the feeding of the five thousand or the stilling of the tempest may be forgotten, but that will, for ever, be engraved on the tablet of the human soul till its last breath, which he, lying along the Cross in Golgotha clothed with purple and platted crown of thorns, uttered with raised hands, towards heaven, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Therein lies his miracle, superhuman love, greatness, wisdom, fortitude and virtue.

In the like manner one may or may not accept some particular phenomena happening during the *Sadhana* period of Sri Ramakrishna--though these too have their utility and usefulness in their own place--for after all they do not exhaust all the remarkable factors of his great life which has yet many other activities--the everlasting glories of that wonderful man--which look supernatural and breathe out superhuman ability and are the precious legacy for the future generations for all times to come. Thus by dint of that divine power looking nothing short of miracle--for he was here playing with the human minds and moulding them like lumps of clay--he could say to the sceptic Narendra Nath, "Yes, my boy, I see God as I see you, perhaps more intensely, nay, I can also show you God," which changed his life for ever, because in those words he felt the living presence of God and His divine breath; or he could point out to a doubting disciple, "Behold, there is thy Isthm," and the disciple really saw It with his own eyes in all Its Beauty and Effulgence. In that direction lay the miraculous power of the Master when with a touch or glance he could overpower a man with rapturous enthusiasm and make him realise what was meant by divine beatitude or when by a kind word he could redeem an unfortunate soul from the biting agony of cruel cerberus, rescue him from the torture of the hell-hell, direct his mind to the Kingdom of God and ultimately bring to

his lips the sweet nectar and ambrosia of immortality. These are the outstanding facts of his glory and magnificence about which there must not be any pothor or confusion and on these bed-rocks of universal truths men of all shades and

colour will ever find their sweet repose and undying felicity. These are the real miracles of his life,

(Concluded)

ANANDA.

REVIEWS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

A Guide to Health.—By Mahatma Gandhi. Published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras. Pp. 147. Price Re. 1-8.

This is a translation in English by Mr. A. Rama Iyer M. A. of the original in Gujrati by Mahatma Gandhi. As Mahatmaji says, "Prevention is better than cure," and most of the diseases we suffer from are due to our neglect of the principles of hygiene and sanitation. Good air and water would reduce the diseases by 50 per cent. Regular diet which is simple and nourishing with plenty of exercise is sufficient to keep the body intact during the soul's sojourn in this terrestrial home. If all these are supplemented by Brahmacharyam then there would be very little need for doctors and medicines. This is a point to which all should give their serious attention. Brahmacharyam is the corner-stone of our life's work. It gives us health, intellect, an indomitable will and energy and makes our life a success. Its absence only leads to misery, disease and poverty and we may end our life in a ghastly ruin. Mahatmaji has ably treated all these points in the first part of this book which deals with the general principles of personal health and hygiene. The second part deals with some simple treatments for common ailments and accidents. The methods prescribed are very simple and at the same time we are sure of the results as they are based on the author's own experience in the various cases handled by him. We hope our readers will take advantage of such a valuable book.

To the Nations.—By Paul Richard. Published by Messrs Ganesh & Co., Madras, with a Foreword by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. 2nd Edn. Pages 83. Cloth Price Re. 1-8.

The original in French has been translated into English by Sri Aurobindo Ghose. In this little book the author voices forth the views of the

people who are tired of the existing state of things. M. Richard has distinctly stated what he sincerely believes—that the great war is bound to free the earth from the spirit that dominated it—the spirit of barbarous mechanism, commercialism and competition, cruel, cold and heartless. The consciousness of humanity will be established in the hearts of men, raising the nations from the animal to the human plane from whence it is only a step to the divine.

The author clearly points out that wealth and power should not be the ideals of the nations. The ideal ought to be self-sacrifice and not self-interest. "No nation lives for itself alone. When it ceases to do so it is checked out." If service be the ideal of all nations, then, it is possible that a small nation may contribute more towards the growth of Humanity than a big and powerful one and as such its right for existence is obvious.

The author concludes by saying that all the nations of the world whether great or small must be independent to follow their own paths and contribute thereby to human progress. They should look on one another not with hatred and contempt, but with love and respect. Only then can there be a harmony of all nations, an ideal world which they at present are trying to establish through wars and competition. Will such a world, such a social perfection ever come? It is sure to come if all the nations leave off their selfishness. But will they discard this selfishness? Whether such an ideal would come or not it is worth while to work for it.

The Drink and Opium Evil. By C. E. Andrews. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 18.

Mr. Andrews describes vividly how the drink evil has spread its degenerating influence not only in towns but also in country-sides in India, and he,

therefore, pleads for the abolition of the excise altogether.

The curse of opium that is mainly produced in India is in some ways more deadly to the soul of India, he says, than other intoxicants as it has its evil effects chiefly on her neighbours, the people of China. Mr. Andrews quotes from the writings of Miss La Motte, an American lady who made a thorough investigation into the opium traffic to show that in European countries and in America the Governments make every effort to repress the sale of habit-forming drugs, while in the Far East, Japan and the Phillipine Islands excepted, the Government strives to encourage and extend the sale. The conclusion is that the production of opium beyond medical necessities should be stopped. This is the greatest hindrance to the suppression of opium in China, where the drug is smuggled and used in huge quantities, and where the practice of administering the injurious hypodermic injections of morphia is unfortunately ever on the increase leading to ruin, physical, moral and economic.

Goods and Bads. Outlines of a Philosophy of Life.
By Professor Alban G. Widgery, M.A., The College, Baroda. Pp. xxiv + 318.

The author in this admirable book of Six Chapters treats of the Philosophy of Life with reference to their values, physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral and religious, their relation to one another and ultimately to "the Good Life -its unity and attainment." The book is written in an easy non-technical style and is all the more valuable because the different kinds of goods and bads which are actually experienced in life are discussed from the practical point of view. Mr. Widgery, a professor of philosophy and comparative religions as he is, has nothing but condemnation for religious intolerance and pleads for toleration and mutual understanding.

A table of contents giving the summary of the principal sections of the book proves to be very useful for reference.

Count Leo Tolstoy. By G. V. Krishna Rao. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 40. Price 4 as.

This booklet attempts to give within its limited compass a short sketch of the life and works

of the great Russian sage and shows how the noble soul had to pass through various changes of circumstances before he could accept the life of poverty, humility, self-sacrifice and service to humanity. Tolstoy's life is an open revolt against the materialistic aspect of the Western civilisation and is a glorious illustration of the struggles between the flesh and the spirit, in which the latter ultimately triumphed. The simple life of a Russian peasant that he chose to live, his work for the uplift of mankind and furtherance of the cause of humanity are object lessons to all men who people this planet of ours, in which there indeed live very few who can really act up to their ideal, no matter how great the struggle and sacrifice they may have to undergo. It is on these points of the sage's life that the writer of the pamphlet wants to draw the attention of the readers.

The King's Wife—By James H. Cousins. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 96.

This is a short drama based on a doubtful incident in the life of the famous Mirabai, the queen of Chitore. Akbar's visit to the temple of "Ranjhore Deva," the deity worshipped by Mira and his parting present to the deity of a necklace which resulted in the Rana's casting suspicion on Mira's character is after all a questionable fact. Again the author ends the story in a tragedy with the death of Mira and does not treat of her miraculous resuscitation and also the good she did to humanity thereafter. The author himself is aware of all these facts and apologises for the liberty he has taken. His object has been to paint the three great feelings found in all countries viz. simple devotion, spiritual hankering and fanaticism. These the author has brought out excellently and the sense of beauty and the melody of diction displayed make the book a success.

The Music of India. By H. A. Poppley. Published by the Association Press, 5 Russell Street, Calcutta. Pages 173.

The very soul of the East, especially of India is woven with art and music. Art and music are with the Indians a part of their religion. In India music was developed not only to the full seven notes but also to half and quarter notes ages ago. The similarity between the Greek, Persian and Arabic scales with that of the Indian shows how much influence

India had on other countries in music though since then these countries have developed the art on different lines. India led in music as also in drama and sculpture. But it is a lamentable fact that like all other sciences music too has become crystallised in form here and no attempt is made to develop it further. Whatever is done now is merely an attempt at imitation.

The author has rightly pointed out that music in India began with the chanting of the Vedas especially of the Saman. The Vedic Mantras were chanted to tune and time with proper intonations. This was the beginning of the Indian music. Since then music had developed, both vocal and instrumental, so that by the Ramayana and the Mahabharata period it was a well developed science and introduced even into dramas. The author has also not failed to show the apparent differences between the Northern and Southern schools. Probably this difference is to some extent due to the Mahomedan influence in the North, while the South which was not so much under its influence has kept its science comparatively pure.

The book treats clearly of the various topics a knowledge of which is essential for understanding the Indian music in the right way. Thus the author has given a clear conception of the seven fundamental notes, the three Gramas, the Sutris, Ragas and Ragnis and lastly the Tala or timing and of various minor things connected with the science. A study of the book gives a fair knowledge of the Indian music. The description of the various instruments is very interesting and at the same time educative.

In the last chapter the author has at length pointed out the difference between the Eastern and Western science of music. The whole thing could be put in a nutshell if we say that the West aims at imitating Nature while the East tries to represent the ideal, the supersensual in music as in art. The Raga pictures, and the prescribed time for singing particular Ragas gives us, as it were, a peep into this Eastern Psychology. Both the Eastern and Western music stirs us, yet they are contradictory in spirit. It is this difference in their nature that makes it difficult for an ordinary man to appreciate both and it is only a trained ear like that of our author's that can appreciate music in these two contradictory systems.

Dozen Weapons. By K. S. Sheshagiri Iyer. To be had of Mr. Vasudeva Sastri, Sanskrit Teacher, Tiruvannamalai. Pp. 40. Price 8 as.

This is a pamphlet treating briefly of various subjects like Dharma, Purity Fortitude, Meditation etc. It may be of interest to our readers.

Ramadas. By C. Ramakrishna Rao. Pp. 19.

This is an interesting life of an Andhra saint, which clearly brings out to the reader that the greatness of India lies in religion, which has produced hordes of great saints who have hallowed this motherland of ours with their holy feet.

Nicolai Lenin.--By G. V. Krishna Rao. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 84. Price 8 as.

This is a short sketch of the life of one of the greatest figures in European politics of to-day. Even his enemies have to recognise that he is one of the greatest living statesmen in Europe--a most remarkable personality brought by the world-war into prominence. Lenin with his band has saved the civilisation of Russia from utter collapse and the fact that Russia still survives is the miracle played by this great man. He has raised his hand against the oppression of capitalism and is determined to fight it as much as in him lies. But this great man falls short in the field of moral idealism, of everything that we mean by spirituality proper. He is a soldier, a child of the Western civilisation and though he is standing for the redemption of humanity and social liberation, his methods seem to be that the end justifies the means. Any means to reach the goal are justifiable to Lenin.

The character of Lenin as a man, his personal integrity, rigorous purity, simplicity and unconcern for name and fame, his devotion to the ideal of a better world—all these are clearly pointed out by the author in this little sketch. We recommend this book to our readers.

Mr. Montagu's Failure.--By T. S. Krishnamurti Iyer. Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 92. Price Re. 1-8.

*The Revolt of the East.**--By Bernard Houghton. Pp. 98. Price Re. 1-8.

*Reform or Revolution.**--By Bernard Houghton. Pp. 22.

*The Psychology of Empire.**--By Bernard Houghton. Pp. 17.

A case for Mulshi Petra Satyagraha. Published by Satyagraha Sahayak Mandal, Poona. Pp. 53. Price 4 as.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA:

(Continued from page 256.)

**स्वभायया सृष्टिमिदं सदसलक्षणं विभुः ।
प्रविष्ट ईश्यते तत्सरूपोऽप्निर्विधत्ति ॥४७॥**

47. The omnipresent Lord, pervading this gross and subtle¹ universe created by His own Mâyâ,² acts in the shape of different things, like fire³ in combustible things.

[¹ Gross and subtle—Sat and *Asat* may also mean higher and lower beings.

² *Mâyâ*—See note 3 on Sloka 16, Ch. II.

³ Fire etc.—Fire has no form of its own. As the principle of Tejas it is present in everything. But when a piece of wood burns, fire also seems to have that shape. So all the apparent activity of the Atman is due to the supervening adjuncts (*Upâdhis*) through which It manifests Itself.]

**विसर्गाद्याः इमणानान्ता भावा देहस्य नात्मनः ।
कलानामिव चन्द्रस्य कालेनावश्यकवर्णना ॥४८॥**

48. The states¹ from birth to death belong to the body, not to the Atman, like the digits of the moon² occasioned by Time whose march is inscrutable.

[The illustration of the moon is explained in this verse.

¹ States etc.—all the stages of a corporeal being's life.

² Moon etc.—The moon remains as it is, only there is an apparent change over it due to astronomical motions.]

**कालेन होष्यते गेन भूतानां प्रभवात्ययौ ।
नित्यावपि न दश्यते ग्रात्मनोऽप्नेश्यथाचिषाम ॥४९॥**

49. Birth and death, though ever assailing bodies through the massive velocity of Time, are never witnessed of the Self, as in the case of the flames¹ of fire.

[This is a return, in passing, to the topic of fire to emphasise the transitoriness of things and thus stimulate a spirit of renunciation.

[¹ Flames etc.—The flames are subject to change, but not the fire.]

**गुणौरुणानुपादने यथाकालं विमुच्यते ।
न तेषु युज्यते योगी गोभिर्गा इव गोपतिः ॥५०॥**

50. The Yогin accepts sense-objects through the sense-organs and returns them at the due season,¹ without being attached to them, like the sun,² (giving back) the water (it sucked) through its rays.

[The analogy of the sun is made explicit in this and the next Sloka.

¹ Due season—wherever there is a needy person.

² Sun etc.—The reference is to the circulation of water between the earth and the sky.]

**बुद्ध्यते स्वे न भेदेन वर्यक्तिस्य इव तद्रूपः ।
स्थूलमतिभिरात्मा चावस्थितोऽकर्वत् ॥५१॥**

51. Like the sun,¹ the Atman, established² in Itself, is not perceived as admitting of varieties, but when manifesting³ Itself through an adjunct, is looked upon by dull-witted people as becoming identified with that.

[¹ The sun etc.—The sun, as it is, is one, but when reflected in water etc., it appears to be many and seems to be small or distorted and so forth.

² Established etc.—ever the same.

³ Manifesting etc.—See note 3 on Sloka 47.]

**बातिलेहः प्रसङ्गो वा कर्तव्यः क्वापि केनचित् ।
कुर्वन्विन्दत संतापं कपोत इव दीनधीः ॥५२॥**

52. One should not cherish too much affection or attachment for anyone. If one does so, one is smitten with affliction like the poor pigeon.

[The lesson which the pigeon taught is graphically set forth from this Sloka to the end of the chapter.

**कपोतः कञ्चनारणये कृतनीडो वनस्पतौ ।
कपोत्या भार्या सार्धमुवाम कतिचित्समाः ॥५३॥**

53. A pigeon built his nest on a certain tree in a forest and lived there for some years with his partner.

**कपोतौ स्नेहयुग्मितहृदयौ गृहधर्मिणौ ।
द्विष्ट दण्डाङ्गमङ्गन बुद्धि बुद्धा अवन्धतुः ॥५४॥**
54. The pigeons, with their hearts tied in a bond of love, lived a family life, fixing their gaze on each other, in close companionship, each intent on the other.
**शश्यासनाटनस्थानवार्ताकिंडाशनादिकम् ।
मिथुनीभूय विस्त्रिष्ठौ चेरतुर्वनराजषु ॥५५॥**

55. In that forest they together went through such acts as lying, sitting, roaming, resting, talk, sport and eating,—without any fear.

**यं यं वाञ्छति सा राजंस्तपंश्यन्त्यनुक्षिप्ता ।
तं तं समन्यरकामं कृच्छ्रेणाप्यजितेन्द्रियः ॥५६॥**

56. Whatever the female bird, who pleased her partner and was agreeably treated by him, wished for, the other, O king,¹ fulfilled those wants, even at the cost of much trouble, for he was a slave to his senses.

[¹ King—Yadu.]

(To be continued.)

NEWS AND NOTES.

Our New Hindi Monthly—The “Samanway.”

We are glad to announce that we are going to start from our Branch at 28 College Street Market, Calcutta, a Hindi Monthly named the *Samanway* (Harmony) on the same lines as the Prabuddha Bharata and other organs of the Ramakrishna Order. The object of the magazine will be to disseminate among the Hindi-knowing public the life-giving truths of the Scriptures interpreted in the light of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the Swami Vivekananda. Hindi translations of the writings and utterances of these great masters will be a regular item, and the paper will contain interesting original articles on religion, philosophy, social problems, education and industries. Those outside the Hindi-speaking public who appreciate the importance of Hindi as a *lingua franca* for India and are desirous of cultivating its knowledge will find an easy medium of instruction in the translated pages of the *Samanway*. We appeal to our readers to help in the circulation of the new magazine, the first issue of which (Demy 8vo, 48 pages) will appear in the middle of January, 1922. The annual subscription including postage will be Rs. 3, and the get-up will be satisfactory.

Permanent Peace

Human desire knows no bounds. Unless kept within legitimate limits it refuses to be satisfied even with all the world's riches and possessions. The insatiable thirst for power and wealth gaining full ascendancy over the soul of man impels him to encroach upon others' rights and possessions, and leads to wars and strife that destroy not only his own peace but the peace of the world as well. This has been the history of the degradation of man, the rational being, the acme of God's creation! This is the use he has made of his superior intellect and possibility to degenerate himself into a state that is worse than that of the brute! But the redeeming feature is that the world is becoming weary of wars. The inaugural words of President Harding addressing the assembly of the representatives of the nations taking part in the Disarmament Conference that is being held at Washington indicate that the world may probably return to a better sense and better relationships. He says:—"All thoughtful people desire to see the war outlawed.....No pride need be humbled, no nationality submerged, but we would have a mergence of the minds committing us all to less preparation for war and more enjoyment of peace.

If finer sentiments were not urging us, cold, hard facts of excessive cost and eloquence of economics would urge us to make a reduction of armaments." President Harding also laid down the noble purpose for which all nations should live: - "I welcome you not alone in good will and with a high purpose but with the high faith that we are meant for the service of mankind, with the hope for undertakings which will emphasise guarantees for peace and for commitments to less burdens and better order which will tranquillise the world."

Would to God that all nations may be guided by these noble sentiments and the higher ideal of life! But the world would know no peace so long as the mighty nations are bent upon being the dictators or rulers of the weaker and less fortunate nations and follow under the cloak of high ideals and international justice the axurious policy that brought about the Great War and still threatens the peace of the world, so long as all nations show signs of feverish arming and are more anxious for the development and invention of destructive technique of war neglecting the much needed reconstruction and courting moral and economic ruin instead. It is certain that unless all nations give up their grossly material setting and establish themselves on a nobler basis no permanent peace and happiness can ever be realised on earth. And the higher ideals of life and humane national policies alone can keep under check the ambitions of militarism and imperialism. As an esteemed American friend very truly writes to us . . . "War leaves many legacies poverty, misery, crime. Some day men may learn that co-operation is the way but never while greed and self rule. The only thing that can prevent war is the regeneration of the human heart, of the poor equally with the rich or powerful."

The Industries of the Country-side

In an agricultural country like India or Ireland that possesses a peasantry of small holdings and is broken up into small farms, the nation lives practically in the cottage and it is the cottage industry that is most suited to the agricultural people. Rev. P. Conefry, in a well thoughtout paper on "The Industries of the Country-side" read before the members and associates of the Catholic Truth Society at Dublin, pleaded for the establishment of home in-

dustries to enable the peasantry to be self-supporting and restore them to their rightful position.

In the past, Father Conefry said, there existed a comprehensive system of cottage industries in Ireland and almost every farm-house in the country was self-supporting. There were the small hand-mills which supplied fresh meal in the summer, as also the mills worked by water-powers. There lived, besides, in almost every parish the white-smiths, black-smiths, tin-smiths and nailers. The white-smiths and nailers had disappeared. Coopers, turners and wheelwrights had almost disappeared. Tailors and shoemakers who lived in every parish were also disappearing. Wicker-work too was practised with great skill in the past. Quilt-making, a very useful industry practised with great skill by women, was almost forgotten. The Irish cottage system once excelled in the manufacture of flax, and wool into cloth. These industries, most suitable as they were to an agricultural people, kept them employed when they could not be working on the land.

Two social diseases, Father Conefry further said, crept into the country shoenicism or contempt for what was Irish, and snobbery that might be defined as "ignorant imitation of gentility." These were to a very great extent responsible for suffocating the spirit of nationality in many of the rising generation, for the people were ashamed of almost everything that bore the brânl of Irish nationality and showed contempt not only for the diet of the nations, for its music and dance, but also for Irish names of many of the districts. And the existing system of education which besides other defects neglected technical education was mainly responsible for the deplorable state of affairs.

What Rev. Conefry said of Ireland holds equally true of India also. The revival of the old self-governing and self-supporting village system, the re-establishment of cottage industries which are primarily meant for supplying the household, and the stemming of the tide of denationalisation that still holds to a great extent its sway in in the country--these are the momentous problems before India as well. And a system of true national institutions that would train students in handi-crafts and scientific agriculture, impart technical education side by side with general

education are the crying need of the day in India. Such an educational system as it would directly help the student to earn his livelihood is sure to attract a larger number of pupils from all classes, especially the peasantry and handicraftsmen who do not at present care for a simply theoretical education that is not remunerative and does not help them in the struggle for existence which is unfortunately becoming keener day by day. And in a country like India where the ordinary labourer cannot always earn even by hard labour, let alone the question of maintaining his family, enough to meet the barest necessities of life and keep his own body and soul together, it is indispensable to impart an education that besides developing the intellectual, moral and spiritual faculties of the students is calculated to better his economic condition also.

The Function of Culture

"O my mind, why don't you learn the art of tilling? This human soil is lying fallow; it would yield gold if you could but cultivate it"--thus sang Sri Ramaprasad, the great national poet of Bengal. The analogy between agriculture and homo-culture is patent and the laws of the natural world are so often applicable to the world spiritual as well. Mr. James H. Cousins in his article on "The Function of Culture" published in the October issue of the Shama'a very happily shows the relationship between the two meanings of the Latin *colere* from which the word culture is derived--*to till* and *to worship*. He says--"As man cultivated nature, nature cultivated man and both to the same purpose--the turning of diffuse potentialities into definite realisation, the attainment of that other half of life, expression, and the lifting of that expression through successive stages from low to high. This is the function of culture."

Evolution, whether individual or social has to pass through a number of stages to attain its end, where man realises the Divine Personality--its method and purpose,—and endeavours to live in unison with it--"to live (as Milton put it) 'as ever in the great Task-master's eye,' with life not a gratification but a sacrament." The first stage of the process of culture, says the writer, is actuated by necessity, in the second, "culture is rejoiced in for its own sake," while in

the third, culture "becomes a conscious co-operation with a superhuman power which is itself felt to be the source and the culmination of culture."

Speaking of the "supposedly cultured nations" of modern times Mr. Cousins says, "that the bulk of civilised humanity, while nominally cultured, have not yet passed beyond the purely tillage aspect of culture" and "have not yet risen above the domination of low necessity." "They have developed their resources, sharpened their wits, blunted their sensibility to the needs of others, boasted of wealth with poverty in their hearts—but have kept the spirit of worship, of devotion to a higher Power, a matter of one day in seven and of a place apart from life."

Mr. Cousins very appositely concludes—"Culture without worship is incomplete.....But if culture without worship is incomplete, worship without culture is no less incomplete, is soft, vapourous, fanatical, vulgar, cruel. Each needs the other for its fulfilment."

The Vivekananda Tamil School, Kuala Lumpur, F. M. S.

On Saturday, the 8th October, 1921, His Holiness the Swami Abhedananda laid the foundation stone of the new building of the Vivekananda Tamil School that is now managed under the direct supervision of Swami Vilehananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, the head of the Vivekananda Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur. This school, the first of its kind in the Federated Malay States, was started in the Ashrama building in 1914, to impart instruction in their vernacular to the children of the Tamilians who rank third in point of number in these parts. It was previously managed by a committee until it was transferred to the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur, India, in December 1920. As the Ashrama building in which the school is now located is not suitable for want of separate class rooms and playground, besides its being required for other purposes, the Government has on representation kindly granted a piece of land adjoining the Ashrama premises for erecting a suitable school-building as also for a recreation ground for children. We wish this ideal institution every success and congratulate the management for the

efficient manner in which it has been carrying on the noble task it has taken upon itself.

Swami Abhedananda back to India

His Holiness the Swami Abhedananda landed on the soil of his motherland on the 10th of November last. As is well known to our readers the Swamiji has been preaching the universal religion of the Vedanta and interpreting the essentials of Indian Culture and Philosophy to the West for a quarter of a century and has thereby rendered splendid service to the West as also to the land of his birth. Arrangements were being made to accord to him a hearty welcome and the public reception by the Indian citizens of Calcutta took place on the 2nd inst. and that by the Indian students on the 4th of this month.

Sailing for India from San Francisco on the 27th of July last, the Swami reached Honolulu in the second week of August to join the Pan Pacific Educational Conference as a delegate on behalf of India and delivered there a lecture on education. Next he halted at Singapore on his way home and the report of the grand reception held there has been already presented to our readers. At Kuala Lumpur, where the Swami proceeded accompanied by Swami Videhananda of the Rama-krishna Mission and was received with great enthusiasm by the Hindu population, he laid the foundation stone of the Vivekananda Tamil School. The Swami also visited Seremban, Klang etc. in the Federated Malay States, received addresses of welcome and delivered lectures at all these places. He arrived at Rangoon on the 18th October and was accorded a hearty public reception and presented with an address closed in a beautiful silver plate. During his stay at Rangoon he delivered a series of public lectures including "the Message of Buddha," an extract of which we publish elsewhere.

We are glad to announce that we are in possession of a number of recent lectures by Swami Abhedananda and hope to present these to our readers through the pages of the *Prabuddha Bharata* from January next.

The Cult of Nationalism

The apotheosis of political nationalism has been

the bane of the Western Civilisation. The construction of the whole structure of the Western society on the political basis and the acceptance of the political power and economic supremacy as the *summum bonum* of national existence have hampered the growth of the noble sentiments of humanity and led to mortal struggles and devastating wars, political as well as economic. With solitary exceptions in the case of individuals, the nations of the West are all actuated by inordinate communalistic love and its accompanying evils—the greed for exploitation and domination, and the result has been that cut away from the moorings of the higher ideals of life the soul of the West is adrift in chaos and knows no peace. And unless the call of humanity and love universal finds response in the heart of man no permanent peace can ever be brought into being.

Lord Hugh Cecil's letter in the London Times on the Cult of Nationalism which he regards as the curse of Europe, speaks in unequivocal terms of the "embittering and desolating influence of nationalism" that is dominating Europe. He says—"It was nationalism that not only made the war but desiled it with the shameful crimes that have so deeply impresssd our minds.".....It is the cause of the present European unrest too. "Again if we look at Central and Eastern Europe to-day what is the cause of all the bitter antagonism, the violence, lawlessness, the filibustering we see there, except the spirit of nationalism?" Lord Hugh Cecil suggests also the remedy but very rightly does not condemn nationalism altogether—"What is needed is to realise that nationalism is not a quasi-religion, as some people seem almost to imagine, but a human passion, like other passions beneficent only so long as it is strictly disciplined and controlled by the moral law, mischievous and debasing as it passes beyond that control." Love for one's own people and hatred for aliens give birth to nationalism, which however essential it may be in the initial stage of national progress, should be transcended that it may realise itself in internationalism ultimately leading to the fundamental unity of mankind in the Spirit. Nationalism, therefore, should not be regarded as an end in itself for it is but a means to an end.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindabar, Dt. Muttra, U. P.

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Outdoor patients—There were 12002 cases in all of which 2752 were new and 9250 repeated numbers.

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* Including last year's balance.

All contributions are to be sent to the Hon'y. Secretary.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P.

For October, 1921.

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Any contribution will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Kalyanananda, the Hon'y. Secretary.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

From January, 1922, begins the 27th year of the Prabuddha Bharata.

We are glad to announce that from this year an attempt will be made to improve the get-up of the magazine. As an experiment the Prabuddha Bharata will appear in Demy 8vo size from January next, the number of pages being 40 per issue, and as far as possible, better paper will also be arranged for. We are sure the subscribers will hail this change with delight.

To meet the increased expenditure consequent on this change, as well as to cope with the enormous general increase in the cost of labour and materials etc., the annual inland subscription only of the Prabuddha Bharata will be increased to Rs. 2-8 from the coming year. Considering the disadvantages of an out-of-the-way place like Mayavati, the increase is insignificant, and we are confident our kind subscribers will continue to extend the same favour to the journal as they have been doing for the last twenty-six years.

As usual, the January number of the coming year will be sent to our inland subscribers by V. P. P., except to those who kindly notify beforehand their intention of discontinuing their subscription from the next year. To avoid inconvenience and delay due to remoteness of postal communication, as also to save the Registration charge of two annas—since all V. P. articles are registered now—all subscribers are requested to make it a point to kindly send in their subscriptions by **Money Order** so as to reach our office before the 10th of January next.

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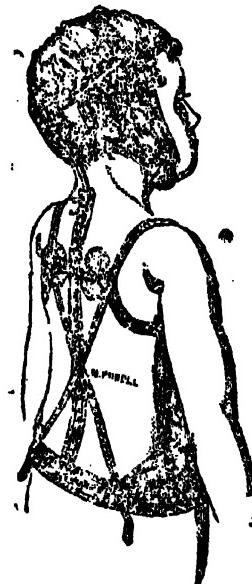
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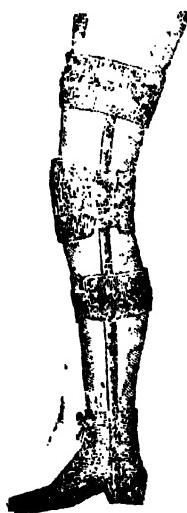
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